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Report by H.M. Ambassador Tel Aviv

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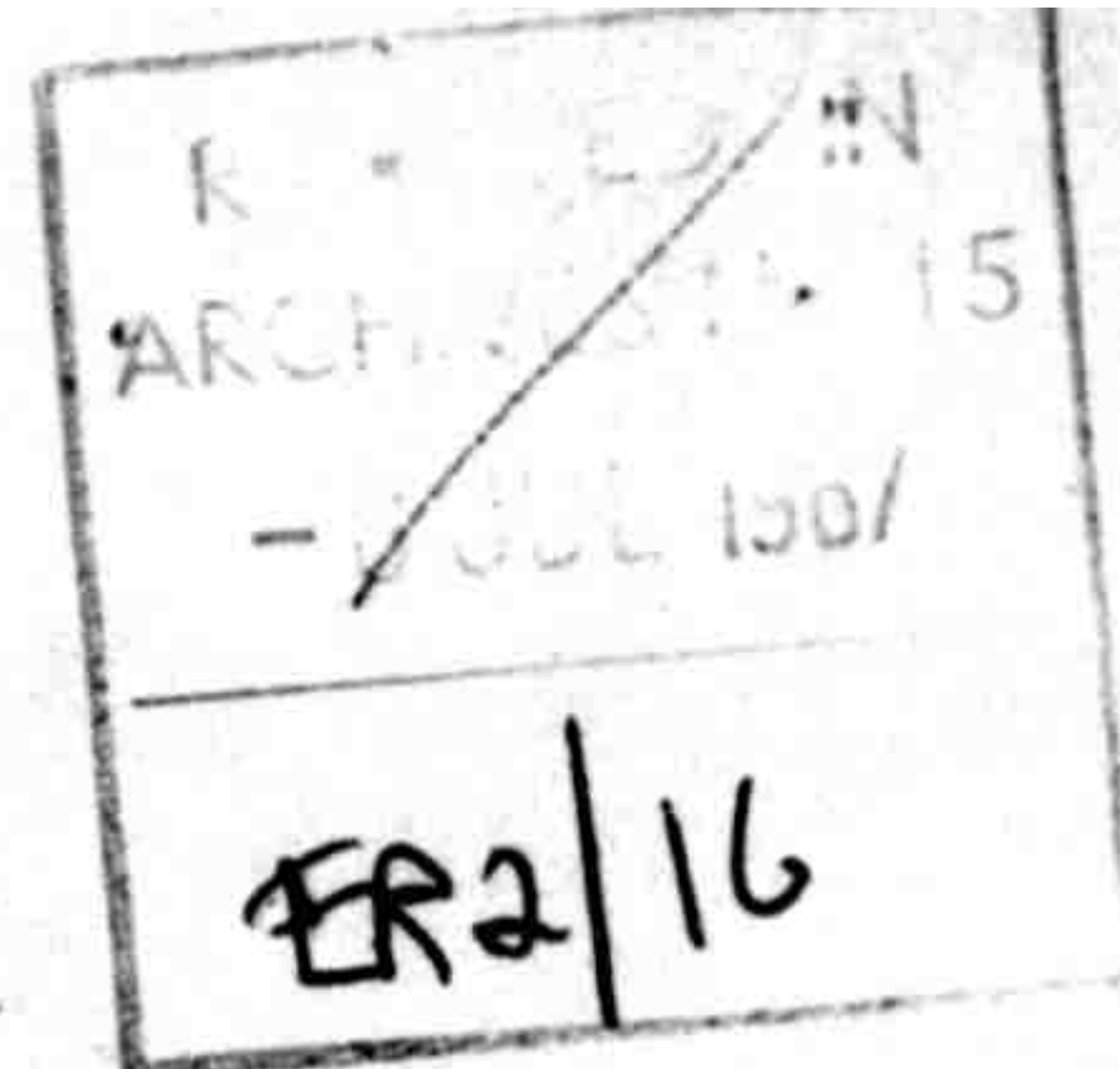
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BRITISH EMBASSY,

TEL AVIV.

Despatch No. 18

(1091/67)

29 June, 1967.

Sir,

The Second Arab-Israel War, 1967  
The Preliminaries

On the fourth of June I reported with some confidence that the Israel Government, for a variety of reasons, appeared to have accepted that for the foreseeable future there was no alternative to maintaining a passive posture (albeit with the maximum state of military readiness possible) in the face of Nasser's seizure of the initiative against them. Next day they embarked on one of the most ruthlessly efficient military campaigns in modern history, in the course of which they shattered the numerically superior forces of a coalition of Arab states, which had, as in 1948-49, combined against them. At the end of just over five days they had occupied the whole of Sinai: their troops were paddling in the Suez Canal: they had opened the Straits of Tiran to Israel shipping: they were in occupation of enough of Syria to ensure that their settlements in Northern Galilee were no longer under the 19 year old threat of Syrian guns on the heights above: they had occupied the entire West Bank of Jordan: and, most miraculous of all, had won the unsought for prize of Old Jerusalem, thus realising the two thousand year old Jewish dream of the recovery of Zion, the City of David.

2. In the course of this despatch I have the honour, with the advantage of hindsight and with some humility in view of my lack of foresight, to give some picture of what led up to these shattering happenings. For over two weeks before the 5th of June, I had been reporting daily, sometimes even hourly, the course of events here. It is not therefore my intention to

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The Right Honourable George A. Brown, M.P.,  
etc., etc., etc.  
Foreign Office.

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try and recapitulate all that happened - there are already so many trees to be counted that one is liable to lose sight of the wood itself. All I can do is to read once more through the mass of telegrams, minutes and reports, then close them, forget them and, after a pause, set down in a highly impressionistic way what is left in my mind of the general trends which led to these cataclysmic (from a Middle Eastern point of view) events.

3. For the last year we seemed to have been occupied mainly with the threat to Middle East peace posed by the Israel/Syria situation. There were countless incidents attributable to the new Syrian doctrine of waging a continual proxy war against Israel. The Government of Mr. Eshkol, because of their fear of the Soviet Union, were extremely chary of yielding to popular demand to teach the Syrians a good lesson once and for all. This Government attitude gave rise to the totally irrelevant aberration of the Samua raid (which nevertheless may have had its lasting and traumatic effect on the subsequent peculiar behaviour of King Hussein). Even the total incompetence of the Syrian Air Force as illustrated on the 7th of April and the failure of any Soviet reaction did little to remove general Government fears about the Soviet/Syrian threat. Indeed, if one is to try to pinpoint any single event which started off the whole train ending with the cease fire of the 10th of June, it is perhaps Mr. Eshkol's speech of the 13th of May. I am sure this was intended as a deterrent measure, lest customary terrorist activities over the Independence Day celebrations might once again renew unwelcome pressures on Mr. Eshkol to allow a fairly large punitive operation. It succeeded in its short term object, but it resulted in the activation of the Syrian/Egyptian Defence Pact, the Syrian accusation of large Israel troop concentrations on her borders (supported for mysterious reasons vis a vis the Egyptians by Soviet sources) and the decision of the Egyptians to move considerable forces into Sinai with the maximum propaganda.

4. There follows what I would call the period of "Overtaken Intelligence Appreciations". The Israelis agreed with us that Nasser's new posture posed no real threat and was done for propaganda purposes only.

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They were even anxious lest King Hussein's constant needling of Nasser on the subject of UNEF and the Straits of Tiran might push him into actions he would otherwise not take. But events were rolling with their own momentum. Appreciations were only made to be overtaken by events. Would or could the Secretary-General of the United Nations allow UNEF forces to be pushed out? He had. As he explained privately to us later, he was motivated by fears for the safety of his forces at the hands of the Egyptians. But all that was heard from him in public at the time was a complaint of one incident involving the buzzing of a United Nations 'plane by the Israelis. Then there were doubts whether UNEF were actually being forced to evacuate Sharm el Sheikh, followed by speculation whether Nasser would actually occupy the point himself. The next questions were whether, having occupied it, he would announce the closure of the Straits of Tiran to Israel shipping and then whether, having announced the closure, he was really going to do anything about it. In all these cases preliminary assessments were unduly optimistic. By this time the Israelis had begun to realise that they and indeed most of the world had been caught flat-footed either, as Israel's Western friends seemed to think, as the result of an unforeseen chain of events, or, as the Israel Intelligence began to suspect, as the result of a carefully thought out plan. It had always been one of the beliefs of your Department, Sir, and in this Embassy that the closure of the Straits of Tiran was likely to be an immediate casus belli and now the Israelis were suddenly faced with the actual situation. What would they do about it?

5. However optimistic had been the various Intelligence appreciations of what was really going on, the Israelis and indeed other responsible governments took precautionary steps. As early as the 18th of May there was a limited call-up in Israel of certain specialised and technical categories as the result of Egyptian moves into Sinai. The withdrawal of UNEF led to a much more extensive mobilisation on the night of the 20th of May. As it became apparent that the occupation of Sharm el Sheikh might well lead to hostilities, the United States Government and Her Majesty's Government issued warnings to casual visitors to the Middle East to leave. By the afternoon of the 23rd of May it was clear that quiet but nevertheless much increased

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mobilisation measures were being put into force and from all the indications I had from various sources, both then and subsequently, an attack on Egypt was planned to take place at first light on the 24th of May. Meanwhile, however, heavy American pressure to leave it to the United States and to other powers to secure the opening of the Straits had had its effect on the Government and it was decided not to fight but to send Mr. Eban to the United States to probe these possibilities further. My own instructions arrived after the Government decision had been taken, but there is no doubt that the news of the Prime Minister's intended Margate speech served a useful purpose in convincing the Israel Government that the United States was not alone in realising the gravity of the situation and in being prepared to do something about it.

6. We had got over one hump and another situation (in a series) had been created which made it politically difficult for the Israelis to take any action on their own. Although the possibility of some successful Syrian terrorist action still hung over us, the problem had become concentrated on the Straits of Tiran, to which all eyes were turned. There followed a considerable period when our main preoccupation was lest the Israelis might seek the desired showdown with Egypt by means of some small incident involving the passage of an Israel ship through the Straits, an Egyptian response and a massive Israel counter-response. The Israel Army and their highly efficient Intelligence services were, however, thinking about other matters. They observed the reinforcements and consolidation of the Egyptian tanks and aircraft in Sinai. They realised that in the event of a fight with Egypt it was inevitable that they would have to fight on a second front with Syria. They saw the "reasonable" Arabs like King Faisal and King Hussein becoming ensnared in the triumphant progress of the Nasserite bandwagon. They knew that the 23rd of May was about the last date on which they could have caught the Egyptians more or less unprepared and they saw the basic Israel advantages of surprise and the ability to mobilise and deploy rapidly becoming whittled away with each day that passed. They began to see that another situation was imperceptibly arising, which

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again the Foreign Office and this Embassy had always considered a possible casus belli: the effective united large scale build up of Arab armies designed to attack Israel. Morale among the public began to decline. The economic consequences of maintaining a large scale of mobilisation were beginning to be discussed. The diplomatic interlude merely served to increase the feelings in the Army of frustration and disillusionment with the political leadership. They still had no doubts about their abilities to take on all comers, but they felt that political delays were liable to increase military difficulties, casualties and the safety in war of the civil population. It is from this period that the demand began to be expressed for greater leadership and more decisiveness in the Government, which was to end in the appointment of General Dayan as Minister of Defence. Meanwhile we in this Embassy were busy watching the situation in the Straits of Tiran like a terrier at a rat hole.

7. The next hump was already visible. Would Mr. Eban bring back enough to satisfy the Israel Government that her interests in the Straits of Tiran could be preserved by other friendly powers and that Israel did not have to take unilateral action? In view of the feelings of the 200,000 or so voters in the Army, the gloomier Intelligence appreciations of the situation in the Arab world and the Government's own awareness of its growing unpopularity for inaction, it looked as if the decision was bound to be a fairly close run thing. On the assumption that Israel military action would have to take a surprise and preemptive form; becoming increasingly apprehensive that our appreciation that Nasser did not want a war and therefore would not move first himself might be becoming invalid; and knowing that once hostilities had started the air battle would close down possibilities for civil transport, I decided on the evacuation of dependents of this Embassy.

8. The crucial Cabinet meeting to hear Mr. Eban's case was on the 28th of May. My American colleague and I were using every argument we could to try and ensure the decision went the right way. In the event it did. In an interview I had with Mr. Allon, the Minister of Labour, immediately after the Cabinet decision, he seemed satisfied that the right course

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had been taken. But he gave me strong indications again that it was not really the question of the Straits of Tiran which was worrying the Israelis. It was the overall picture. Nasser was moving his armour in a way which suggested Eilat might be his target. He also stressed the importance of the air battle.

9. Since this latter must have played such a vital role in the final Israel decision to strike, perhaps I may be excused if I make some of the salient points which both we and the Israelis have all along had in mind. Israel has one of the most efficient air forces in the world, but it only has four main aerodromes off which to operate and these are in fairly close proximity to each other owing to the geographical formation of this tiny country. Israel also has a highly concentrated urban nexus placed square in the narrowest part of her territory - at one point only nine miles wide. The Arabs, and in particular the Egyptians, had numerically superior forces and the Egyptians had numerous and widely scattered air bases with most of their bombers (a commodity Israel does not possess) situated in air fields well to the south and near to the Sudanese border. The Israelis could possibly hope to match by superior skill the united Arab air forces in the air, but they would take severe losses and there was bound to be some penetration of the urban nexus by Egyptian bombers with resulting civilian hardship. It was therefore obvious that in the event of any type of hostilities with Egypt which went beyond a border clash, the Israelis would have to strike first at the Egyptian air fields in order to stop, completely if possible, the capability of the Egyptians to put their superior and more damaging air force into the air. The converse is equally true, that Israel simply could not afford to allow a first Egyptian strike against her limited air fields. We now know that Nasser was talking of forcing the Israelis into a war but insisting that they must strike first, as though the avoidance of "aggression" as Rule One in the United Nations Widsen were some sort of talisman which would bring ultimate salvation or victory. The fact that Nasser's approach made utter military nonsense in terms of modern warfare cannot really have been foreseen by the Israelis who must have assumed that the Egyptians, with their Russian advisers, must have had at least some rudimentary commonsense.

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Over a year ago I advised your Department that my appreciation was that in the event of hostilities with Egypt the Israel air force would have to take action at D minus five minutes. In my conversation with Mr. Allon he fairly well confirmed this theory. As one journalist later put it to me, it was like the Western film where the more intelligent hero could not even afford to watch the gun hand of the fast-drawing villain, but watched his eyes for the flicker in them that would indicate that his gun hand was about to move.

10. Externally there followed the period of the steps to organise an International Maritime Declaration or, possibly even, Force. I myself had been rather surprised to gather from Mr. Eban that he thought this period might run into weeks. His estimation was certainly out of tune with what the Israel public felt and certainly what the Army felt. The very decision to go for a diplomatic solution had heightened the sense of frustration and put the Israel Intelligence services in a state of near despair as they hourly plotted the ascending graph of the Arab potential. Internally this meant that the Government finally had to give way to pressure to include General Dayan in the Cabinet, not only as a sop to the Army but as a sop to public opinion as a whole. It really made little difference to overall Government policy, but just as Nasser had to seek his talismans in concepts of the United Nations Charter, so too did the Israel public and Army have to have its one-eyed (and far from yellow) idol. It is perhaps typical of Israel political life that this event could not come about without the most agonising contortions among the parties and the political machine as a whole.

11. King Hussein's sudden rush to Cairo, his embrace of Nasser and the certainty that Jordan would now in some way become involved in the fight, caused no major public flutter. Once again the feeling was that this was something that had to happen, it was largely political and it did not really matter very much though it was thought rather surprising that the King had had to go to quite such lengths to demonstrate that he too was a loyal member of the United Arab Command. This was not, however, the feeling in the Israel Intelligence services or in the heart of General Narkiss (Commander

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of the Central front) who was expected to hold his long frontier against Jordan attacks with about two brigades. He was given some solace by the strengthening of his command with a little more armour and one extra weak brigade formation. Generally speaking, however, the hope still was that King Hussein, if he had to fight at all, would fight a sort of politico-military war and would do nothing really foolish. Looking back, it now seems rather surprising to me that in the welter of good advice and pressure to which the Israelis were subject, as far as I know, at no time did anyone think of speaking severely to King Hussein about the lunacy of his actions or warn him against attacking Israel seriously. It was left to the Israelis to make a last minute appeal to him, but by that time His Majesty was telling foreign Ambassadors that all he wanted was "to be left alone with the Israelis".

12. The major problem facing the Israel Government at this time, quite apart from the bitter pill of General Dayan, was how to maintain the necessary military readiness for what was obviously going to be a long haul, without damaging the economy of the country too badly. Committees were set up and sensible arrangements made to meet the situation. Politically the Government realised that they had again tied their hands, possibly even more firmly than before. Even General Dayan, quite honestly, in conversation with his brother-in-law and other Generals who were chafing at inaction, was expounding the doctrine that it would not pay Israel at all to infuriate the Tall Texan by acting on her own when He was dealing with Israel's interests. On Saturday the 3rd of June large numbers of troops were released and the beaches were as crowded as Blackpool in the holiday season. But on the Saturday night the Israel Military Intelligence was at it again. This time they were worried about reports of Iraqi reinforcements on their way to Jordan and Syria, the possibility of Jordanian troops being placed under Egyptian command and arrangements to fly two battalions of Egyptian commandos to Jordan. They had woken up to the fact that they were now probably facing a third casus belli which we had always feared - a Nasserite controlled Jordan. Like the other preceding events things had come about in a very un-clearcut way. The presumption had always been that the gallant little king might lose

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his throne and that a Government totally hostile to the West (and even more so to Israel) would be in command of the West Bank. It was suddenly appreciated that militarily this was what, in fact, had happened although the previous political outward trappings were still there. There was a further Cabinet on the Saturday night which was inconclusive. Fear of the Tall Texan still won the day. It was for the Intelligence services to try and demolish this last obstacle.

13. On Sunday the Cabinet met again and General Yariv, the Director of Military Intelligence, who has told me since that by this time he was the most unpopular man in Israel with the politicians, gave the performance of his life. He explained the great gravity of the new Jordanian threat which would be even worse after the Iraqi brigades arrived. He expounded the dangers of the overall Arab threat drawing extensively on intelligence he had about Egyptian thinking and planning, together with even more significant moves in the shape of tank concentrations. These looked as if Nasser might well be contemplating preempting Western efforts to get the Straits of Tiran opened by taking the port of Eilat and therefore rendering the whole question nugatory. He exposed that the diplomatic effort was getting nowhere. I understand Mr. Eban had some embarrassing moments in explaining quite how long the timetable was likely to be - apparently he was less than precise about this in the Cabinet of the 28th of May. Finally Yariv gave an analysis of every piece of information available to him indicating American thinking at all levels. He succeeded in persuading the Cabinet that President Johnson might well not be nearly as angry, if the Israelis took action, as the Israel Cabinet itself thought.

14. The inclusion of Messrs. Beigin, Dayan and Saphir in the Cabinet at this stage was really an irrelevance. Dayan could certainly have been relied on to have supported the military appreciation of the gravity of the threat and the military need to take some sort of action. Basically, however, he did not have to work very hard to convince his colleagues. The overriding military arguments were reinforced by an acceptance that the political disadvantages were perhaps not as grave as they had been thought to be.

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I assume also that the decision once taken, it was decided to implement it immediately, thereby regaining to a large extent the element of surprise and illustrating once again, if it needs to be done, the advantage of the short interior lines of communication of this country and the efficiency of the call up procedures which had now had almost three weeks running-in period. The soldiers on leave were almost invisibly whisked back to their units in the course of Sunday afternoon.

15. When the air raid sirens went at 8 o'clock on Monday morning there was nobody in Tel Aviv who did not think they were merely a practice. They went again about 40 minutes later with no All Clear in between, but this was because those responsible had not yet perfected how to differentiate between an Alert and an All Clear! Certainly nobody knew that the war had started and even the preliminary communique indicated little more than a somewhat outsize-scale armoured clash to the south of Gaza. My first reactions, when I knew the war had started were to feel that quite apart from the brilliance of the military campaign, which I was sure would follow, an even greater feat had probably been in a deception plan unparalleled in history which had probably gone on for days.

16. Perhaps this is still the case and it would certainly be interesting to think so and to try and analyse the scope of this plan. But I do not believe it really. Things were much more simple than that. My American colleague and myself and the other diplomats in Israel are unfortunately not party to Israel Cabinet proceedings, but I am certain, along with my other colleagues, that as late as Saturday night there was no decision to go to war. What passed on Sunday we were not aware of until later. And what passed on Sunday was the convincing of the Israel Cabinet that Israel was faced with a situation incorporating no less than three elements each of which in previous days would have been considered a casus belli on its own. This was coupled with an appreciation that neither the Russians nor the Americans would move militarily and that the latter, who were much more of a deterrent to Israel action than the Russians, were unlikely, for a variety of reasons, to react too strongly. All that was left to be seen was the answer to the question the Army had

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been asking ever since they had become restricted by world diplomatic activities - "How long have we got? Can we at least have 48 hours?" It was to meet this question that the real deception plan was entered upon. Maybe here one can see the hand of Moshe Dayan. At any rate it succeeded, helped by the ineptness of Israel's adversaries in their response and Israel got more than twice its 48 hours. This is really a subject for inclusion in a further despatch on the actual military operations which I have the honour to be preparing parallel with this present effort.

17. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives in Amman, Ankara, Bahrain, Beirut, Bonn, Jedda, Khartoum, Kuwait, Moscow, Nicosia, Paris, Rabat, Tehran, Tripoli, Tunis and Washington; to the United Kingdom Representative at the United Nations in New York, to H.M. Consul-General, Jerusalem; to the Commander, British Forces, Near East; and to the British Interests Section in Algiers.

I have the honour to be,  
With the highest respect,  
Sir,  
Your obedient Servant,

*Michael Hudson*

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Despatch No. 19 ✓

(1091/67)

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
TEL AVIV.

29 June, 1967.

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The Second Arab-Israel War, 1967  
The Battle

S U M M A R Y

1. Who started the war? Almost certainly Israel. Her reasons. (Paragraphs 1 & 2)
2. Outbreak of hostilities. The air battle. (Para 3)
3. Advance into the Gaza Strip and Sinai. (Para. 4)
4. Campaign against Jordan. (Paras. 5-7)
5. The real deception plan and how Israel won time at the United Nations to complete the destruction of Nasser's forces. (Para. 8)
6. The campaign against Syria. (Para. 5)
7. Naval engagements. (Para. 10)
8. Almost unbelievable discrepancy between fighting abilities of Israelis and Arabs. (Para. 11)
9. The end of hostilities. Reactions in Israel. (Para. 12)
10. The Israelis made war. The Arabs thought it was a game according to rules which suited them. (Paras. 13-14).
11. Was this only the first round? (Para. 15)

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BRITISH EMBASSY,

TEL AVIV.

(1091/67)

DESPATCH NO. 19



Sir,

The Second Arab-Israel War 1967

The Battle

In my despatch No. 18 of today's date I have described Israel's reactions to events starting with President Nasser's moves in Sinai and the Straits of Tiran which led to general hostilities between Israel and her Arab neighbours early on the 5th of June. I have the honour in this despatch to trace the course of the war as seen from Tel Aviv, in so far as this is possible on the still incomplete information available. In due course, when the fog of war has dispersed, and the Israel military authorities have revealed much more of the picture than they have so far been willing to show, I hope, with the help of my Service Attachés, to provide a detailed military analysis of the campaign.

2. We shall probably never know (and this is perhaps no longer an important question) which side started the fighting. I believed at the time and it is still my view that the Israelis got in the first blow, although there may be substance in their claims, which they say have since been confirmed from captured documents, that the Egyptians were on /the

The Rt. Hon. George Brown, M.P.,

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the point of launching a tank attack to cut off Eilat and an air strike against Israel's airfields. I have said in my parallel despatch that I am pretty certain that the decision to attack was taken on the 4th of June and was influenced by political as well as military factors. By then any hopes Israel may have had that action by the U.S.A. and Britain could defeat Nasser's blockade of the Straits of Tiran had disappeared. The closure of the Straits was in any case no longer the central problem for the Israelis who saw that the whole military balance in the area was daily swinging against them, threatening no less than the continued survival of their country. This danger was forceably brought home to them by the news of King Hussein's hurried visit to Cairo on the 30th of May to sign a joint Defence Pact with Egypt, and by reports of the movement of Iraqi troops and aircraft into Jordan. Either of these developments would, a few months ago, have been in itself a near casus belli. Israel, if she were to keep sufficient forces in the south to defeat the powerful Egyptian army in Sinai, which by then was estimated to be at a strength equivalent to seven divisions with upwards of 1,000 tanks and self-propelled guns, could not deploy more than a thin defensive screen along the Jordan border. A determined armoured thrust by the Jordanian Army, especially if reinforced by Iraqi brigades, could drive through to the sea at Israel's narrowest point in a matter of hours, cutting the country in two. This,

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coupled with their fear of a pre-emptive U.A.R. air strike against Israel's airfields and cities, must have seemed to the Israel Government an unacceptable risk. There could only be one answer - to strike first before the odds became too great.

3. The first official intimation of the commencement of hostilities was telephoned to my Defence Attaché by the Israel Military Liaison Officer at 8.35 a.m. local time on the 5th of June. The message simply said that fighting had broken out in Southern Israel early that morning between Egyptian air and armoured forces advancing towards Israel, and Israeli forces which had "advanced to stop them". I subsequently learned that the opening shots had been fired at about 7 a.m. At 7.45 a.m. the Israel Air Force made its first strikes against Egyptian airfields in Sinai, the Cairo/Canal complex and the Nile Valley. This operation was carried out with surgical precision. Within the first three hours every major airfield in Egypt capable of launching bombing raids against Israel had been put out of use, and the Egyptian Air Force had ceased to exist as an effective instrument of war. No Egyptian aircraft succeeded in penetrating Israel's air space, and no Egyptian bombs fell on Israel territory. Later in the day, airfields in Syria, Iraq and Jordan, from which sporadic attacks had been carried out against civilian targets in the narrow waist of Israel north of Tel Aviv, received the same treatment. There were

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no Arab air strikes on major I.A.F. airfields, but one transport plane was destroyed by a Jordanian Hunter attack on Kfar Sirkin, and Syrian aircraft three times attacked a disused airfield at Megiddo which had been disguised for decoy purposes to resemble the main Israel air base at Ramat David. By shortly after noon on the 5th of June the Israel Air Force had undisputed mastery of the air. Their score card by that time showed the destruction of 400 Arab aircraft (including 300 Egyptian) for the loss of only 19 of their own. Strikes by Israel aircraft on Arab airfields were made on subsequent days to keep them out of operation, but the greater part of the I.A.F. could now be used in support of ground operations.

4. On the ground, Israel forces attacked at the eastern end of the Gaza Strip breaking through to the coast at El Arish. Egyptian forces in the Gaza area were cut off and subsequently subdued. The Israelis fanned out from El Arish westwards along the coast and southwards towards Abu Ageila. Meanwhile two other Israel armoured columns broke into Sinai at Ketsiot and Quntileh.

5. Attacks commenced almost simultaneously from across the Jordan border, despite a last minute attempt by the Israel Government through General Odd Bull, the head of the United Nations Truce Supervisory Organisation, to persuade King Hussein to agree to a mutual arrangement of non-belligerency. The Israelis had no plans to attack Jordan, and their dispositions on the Jordan front were purely defensive and

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manned entirely by reservists. From the middle of the morning of the 5th of June, Jordanian artillery shelled agricultural settlements inside the Israel border, and their long range guns bombarded the main centres of urban population in the coastal strip causing damage in or near Tel Aviv, Peta Tikva, Nathanya and Lod. In Jerusalem, indiscriminate fire was opened on the New City, and Jordanian troops seized Government House, the headquarters of the United Nations Truce Supervisory Organisation, in an apparent attempt to enfilade into the Israel sector. These Jordanian attacks made little military sense, but they inflicted serious civilian damage and casualties, and could not have been better calculated to enrage the Israelis and force them to do battle.

6. At first only holding operations were possible in ~~the~~ the Tulkarm and Kalkilya sectors with the weak Israel forces immediately available on that front. But one Israel brigade from Northern Command (Syrian Front) launched an attack in the afternoon from the North towards Jenin which was successful by nightfall. Its main job was to capture the high ground from which Jordan artillery could shell the main I.A.F. airfield at Ramat David. At dawn on 6 June Israel forces took Latrun and fanned out from Jenin. The air force and ground forces silenced Jordanian artillery positions in the Tulkarm and Kalkilya areas which had kept up a steady bombardment for 24 hours. The thrust through Latrun took the high ground on the way to Jerusalem and Ramallah was occupied by the afternoon. After reinforcements, including tanks,



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~~a steady bombardment for over 24 hours. After reinforcements,~~ including tanks and paratroops had been brought up from the Negev, Jerusalem was surrounded by an Israel pincer movement along the heights, though Jordanian forces still held out in the Old City and continued to shell and mortar the Israel sector and such parts of Jordan Jerusalem as had fallen into Israel's hands.

7. By all accounts, individual soldiers and units of the Jordan Legion fought stubbornly and skilfully, but Jordanian generalship and the administrative handling of their forces was barely one whit more competent than that of the Egyptians. Without air cover, the Jordanian armour, some of which failed to reach the scene of action for lack of fuel, was at the mercy of the Israel Air Force. King Hussein had had his wish and found himself "alone with the Israelis". What he found was not to his taste and he embarked on a series of desperate appeals to the British and American Governments, through their Ambassadors in Amman, for help to bring the fighting to a speedy end. On your instructions, I twice made representations (as did my United States colleague) to the Israel Foreign Ministry for a cease-fire, but by then it was too late. Events were moving too fast. Having been provoked into a fight which they did not want, and had done their best to avoid, the Israelis were in no mood to listen to King Hussein's pleas that they should give him a chance to opt out. In any case, far from scaling down the fighting,

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the Jordanian troops on the ground were attacking even more strongly than before near Nablus and in the Old City. The Israelis were doubtful whether King Hussein was still in a position to control his own forces, or any longer in touch with the military situation (a point of view which seemed later to be confirmed by reports from H.M. Ambassador in Amman on the 7th of June that, unless the Israelis ceased their attacks, the Jordanians would counter attack with everything remaining to them, including "the use of aircraft"). The Israelis suggested that King Hussein should demonstrate his desire to end the fighting by dismissing his Egyptian Commander, but this he was either unable or unwilling to do. Jordanian resistance continued at Nablus and in the Old City of Jerusalem during the early part of the 7th of June, but was subdued later in the day. When the cease-fire took effect Israel forces were in occupation of the whole of the West Bank, and the surviving Jordanian forces had withdrawn eastwards across the Jordan River.

8. Meanwhile, in Sinai, the question was no longer whether the Israelis would win but whether they would be given enough time to complete the destruction of Nasser's armour, which was now streaming back in confusion on all routes westwards to the Suez Canal. On the 7th of June Egyptian tank forces were decimated by ground and air attacks in the areas of Bir Gafgafa and the Mitla Pass, and by the end of the day their escape routes to the Canal had been blocked by Israel forces which

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had got behind them. On the same day an Israel force landed from the sea, supported by paratroops who were landed on a nearby airfield, occupied Sharm-es-Sheikh without opposition, after its Egyptian garrison had withdrawn to avoid being cut off by the main Israel advance to the north. At the time the Israel military authorities disclosed very little information about these operations, neither to the public nor the press, nor, despite the strongest urging of my American colleague and myself, to our Service Attachés. There were sufficient local pointers to show that the battle was going Israel's way. The complete absence of activity by the Egyptian Air Force, for example, was in itself an indication of the extraordinary success achieved by Israel strikes against enemy airfields. But, helped by false or greatly inflated Arab propaganda claims, the true extent of Israel's successes was concealed from the outside world, enabling extra time to be bought at the United Nations. It was not until some 36 hours after the Security Council met to consider a cease-fire that the Russians and the Indians, acting on behalf of the Arabs, realised the danger to their friends and dropped their opposition to a simple cease-fire resolution. Even then the Egyptians continued to delay their acceptance of the cease-fire giving the Israel forces still further time in which to complete the tasks they had set themselves. When firing eventually ceased on the 8th of June, all that was left of the Egyptian forces was the smoking wreckage of  
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their aircraft, armour and other impedimenta, and a pathetic rabble of disorganised troops, who had cast off their boots to hasten their flight, and were now painfully making their way back through the Israel lines to the doubtful sanctuary of the west bank of the Canal.

9. For all their martial bombast the Syrians had a healthy respect for Israel's military capabilities, especially in the air, and were much less eager than King Hussein to sacrifice themselves on the altar of Nasser's ambitions. The war was almost a day old before the Syrian army entered the lists. Apart from two infantry attacks, supported by tanks, on the 8th of June, which were easily driven off, activity soon confined itself to the traditional Syrian sport of shelling Israel settlements within range of the guns which overlooked the Hula Valley and all the border southwards to the Sea of Galilee. The Syrian bombardment was heavy and sustained. Much damage was caused to Israel kibbutzim, though civilian casualties were fortunately light owing to the use of well constructed shelters. Here the women, children and infants lived for five days without ever coming up. Continual attacks by the Israel Air Force reduced the shelling but had little effect on the Syrian gun positions which were deeply dug in and expertly camouflaged. They could not be attacked on the ground until sufficient Israel forces could be assembled to make this possible. By the evening of the 8th of June, the Israelis had brought up heavy reinforcements,

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released by the cessation of hostilities in Jordan and Sinai, and were ready to move in. But, inexplicably as it then seemed, the attack was held off. I have since learned on good authority that, despite strong pressure from the army, Israel Ministers including General Dayan, did their utmost to avoid an advance into Syria, believing that, as Damascus was the nerve centre of Russian influence in the Middle East, the consequences of prodding in that region could have <sup>been</sup> disastrous. ~~consequences.~~ I believe too that the Americans, at the request of Mr. Eshkol, passed messages on the 8th of June to the U.S.S.R. to the effect that Israel had no intention of attacking if the Syrians would agree to an early cease-fire, and later told the Soviets that it was not the intention of Israel to attack Damascus. But the Syrians, believing perhaps that the Israel overtures were a sign of weakness, delayed their acceptance of the Security Council's call for a cease-fire, while continuing their damaging bombardment of Israel settlements. The Israel Government could no longer hold out against army and pressure from the northern kibbutzim. On the 9th of June Israel forces attacked simultaneously at a number of points in the north between Banias and Gadot, and in the south near Tel Katzir. After some heavy fighting against determined Syrian opposition, the Israel attacks were successful and the enemy's strong defensive positions astride the Roshpinna - Kuneitra road were enveloped by advances on the north and south. On the  
/southern





southern sector of the front the Syrian's will to fight was broken by continual air attacks and Israel troops were air-lifted on to the high ground by helicopter. From then on their advance to the eventual cease-fire line proceeded rapidly at all points. By the 10th of June when a cease-fire took effect they had secured the whole of the Syrian escarpment forward of a line between Banias through Kuneitra and Darbashiya to El Hamma. Despite Syrian claims to the contrary, there is no evidence that they advanced further towards Damascus, though with the collapse of Syrian resistance it would have required little extra effort for them to have taken the capital within a matter of hours.

10. To round off this catalogue of unrelieved Arab defeats, it remains only to mention that the Egyptian Navy made little attempt to exploit its clear superiority over the puny naval forces of Israel. Its intervention in the war was limited to some ineffective shelling of positions in the Gaza area captured by Israel forces - an action which indirectly contributed to the tragic ~~air~~ attack made in error by Israel torpedo boats and planes of the Israel Air Force on an American survey ship which foolishly, and without notifying her presence, strayed too close to the Sinai coast. The Israel authorities have put out contradictory statements of attacks by their vessels at Alexandria and Port Said on the night of the 5th/6th of June, and claim to have damaged Egyptian submarines operating off Haifa. But nothing is

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known with certainty about these engagements, other than that the Egyptians hold prisoner six Israeli naval "frogmen".

11. The battle areas which my Service Attachés have so far visited show relatively little evidence of hard fighting, and they believe that the Israel military authorities may in some cases have exaggerated the strength of the enemy resistance. If so, this would be in line with the Israelis' policy of concealing the full extent of their successes in order to win time at the United Nations. It does not however detract from the superb performance of their forces which fully measures up to our own earlier military assessments of their morale, fighting ability and technical competence. These were not elite professional troops lavishly equipped with the most modern equipment, but for the most part civilian reservists, with comparatively limited training behind them, who were carried into battle in civilian transport, and were supplied and supported by essentially civilian services. By comparison, the professional Arab armies showed a total lack of appreciation of the essential elements of modern warfare, and an almost equal inability to use the sophisticated weapons and equipment provided by their Russian quartermasters. Their leadership on almost all fronts was inept to a degree which hardly seems possible after ten years of preparation and training for a war which was to bring about Israel's annihilation.

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12. The end of the fighting on the 10th of June left Israel slightly numbed at the magnitude of her victory. There was no general expression of exultation and few outward signs of public jubilation such as marked V.E. Day in London. Success was accepted calmly, though with a realisation that Israel was now a power in her own right. Demobilised soldiers or those coming home on leave returned as unobtrusively as they had gone, to be welcomed back by their families in private reunions. The immediate mood was one of sadness for the dead. It should be noted that of the killed some 25 per cent were officers and another 15 per cent regular non-commissioned officers, thus illustrating the truth of the story that in the Israel Army the order to "Advance" is replaced by "Follow me". There was some quiet pride in the military valour of Jewish husbands, sons and brothers, coupled with relief that the civilian population had been spared the suffering and loss which they had expected, and were ready to take, from the Egyptian bombing and naval bombardment of their cities.

13. For those of us who were here throughout the period there was something very inspiring and yet rather terrifying about the orderly and almost imperceptible mobilisation of this citizen army; its rather dispassionate and clinical action in war; and the return of a large portion of it to civilian business-as-usual without fuss or heroics. Another impression is of the ability of the Army leaders for brilliant /improvisation -





improvisation - even in Sinai much of the advance, often through areas thought impassable, was played off the cuff, and the whole campaign against Jordan was an improvisation from start to finish. If ever the importance of complete command of the air was illustrated this was a case. We should also not forget the tremendous advantage Israel enjoyed from interior lines of communication. Perhaps a remarkable illustration of this can be seen in the experience of one of the drivers of this Embassy who was in the transport section attached to a parachute unit. On Monday morning he was at Nitzana on the edge of Sinai, his truck loaded with barbed wire and camouflage netting. Some time in the afternoon, his unit, whose role was to attack Abu Ageila from the rear, was told that Abu Ageila was falling without their help. They about faced and by dawn on Tuesday morning were taking Latrun. In the afternoon he was in Ramallah and on Wednesday watched the mopping up operations on the outskirts of the Old City. By Thursday he was in Galilee and spent Friday waiting above the Bridge of the Daughters of Jacob. On Saturday he was half way to Kuneitra. On Monday he was back on leave and "Would you believe it," he said, "I never unloaded my truck all through this time".

14. Against this, with the exception of the Syrians who seem to have shown a certain amount of military realism throughout, the Jordanians and the Egyptians seemed to be living in a military Never-Never-Land. There was some

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element in their thinking that war was only a projection of cross-frontier fighting under the Armistice Agreements. Nasser wanted war but only on terms which made military nonsense. To King Hussein it was some sort of gallant and romantic game. The Ambassadors who were in disfavour on the 4th of June and whom he had told to leave him alone with the Israelis were being appealed to two days later to get the Israelis to stop the fighting. His most successful coup in the war was probably the promulgation of the "Big Lie". At one stroke British and American relations with numerous Arab countries were broken, Consulates and reading rooms were attacked and the flow of oil was stopped. Yet hardly was the war over when he was right back in form, suggesting that his shattered forces should be re-equipped by the West so that he could resist Soviet blandishments. For one side the whole thing was some kind of game controlled (unless they were winning) by rules laid down almost 20 years ago together with some they had thought up since. To the Israelis it was a cold blooded and unwanted surgical intervention. One can only be put in mind of the story of the Spanish Ambassador, who, after a particularly rough audience with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth I, haltingly proposed that Her Majesty might care for a game of chess. "Sirrah", she replied, "tell your master that the only game I play is the Bloody Game of War".

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15. Once upon a time, wars stopped with the surrender of one party or another. Nowadays they stop because of cease fires and armistices imposed from outside. There is no peace treaty; the losers have not really lost and the winners have not really gained. Certainly, the problems for the winners seem more difficult than those for the losers. Already we hear that the Russians have supplied Nasser with 200 MIGs; that there is an airlift of arms and technicians to Cairo; that there have been military alerts and blackouts in Egypt and that, for mysterious reasons, Cairo airport was suddenly sealed off to all traffic for nine hours. The Israelis are watching this situation with some apprehension although it does not get much publicity in the Israel press. The appreciation must be that the Russians are only making a series of rather spectacular gestures to maintain the present Egyptian regime in power and that these gestures do not betoken any possibility of some quick coup by the Egyptians to try and win back some face in the Arab world. I only hope on behalf of the staff of this Embassy that this appreciation is right.

16. I am sending copies of this despatch to the recipients of my despatch No. 18.

I have the honour to be,  
With the highest respect,  
Sir,  
Your obedient Servant,

*Michael Hadaro*



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*Foreign Office and Whitehall Distribution*

ISRAEL  
6 July, 1967  
Section 1

**THE SECOND ARAB-ISRAEL WAR, 1967. THE PRELIMINARIES**

*Mr. Hadow to Mr. Brown. (Received 6 July)*

**SUMMARY**

1. This is an impressionistic despatch which tries to get through the mass of paper of a fortnight which only shows how wrong I was. (Paragraphs 1-2.)

2. The trouble with Syria which occupied us for the previous year and probably led up to what happened. (Paragraph 3.)

3. The events up to the 23rd of May which should normally have led the Israelis to hit the Egyptians then. (Paragraphs 4-5.)

4. The international preoccupation with the question of the Straits of Tiran, what was going on inside Israel and how we again stopped the Israelis going. (Paragraphs 6-8.)

5. The vital importance to either side of the first strike. (Paragraph 9.)

6. Again internal politics and the growth of the problem. (Paragraphs 10 and 12.)

7. Why the Jordanian behaviour really counted. (Paragraph 11.) [sic]

8. The moment of truth. (Paragraphs 13-15.)

9. A rather feeble apologia and some hindsight. (Paragraph 16.)

*P.S.* I realise that this despatch contains what may be considered to be criticisms of "intelligence appreciations". I would like to stress that I am in no way pointing at any British organisation. I am talking about them, the Israelis and very largely this Embassy and myself.

(No. 18. Confidential) *Tel Aviv,*  
Sir, *29 June, 1967.*

On the 4th of June I reported with some confidence that the Israel Government, for a variety of reasons, appeared to have accepted that for the foreseeable future there was no alternative to maintaining a passive posture (albeit with the maximum state of military readiness possible) in the face of Nasser's seizure of the initiative against them. Next day they embarked on one of the most ruthlessly efficient military campaigns in modern history, in the course

of which they shattered the numerically superior forces of a coalition of Arab States, which had, as in 1948-49, combined against them. At the end of just over five days they had occupied the whole of Sinai: their troops were paddling in the Suez Canal: they had opened the Straits of Tiran to Israel shipping: they were in occupation of enough of Syria to ensure that their settlements in Northern Galilee were no longer under the 19-year-old threat of Syrian guns on the heights above: they had occupied the entire West Bank of Jordan: and, most



miraculous of all, had won the unsought-for prize of Old Jerusalem, thus realising the 2,000-year-old Jewish dream of the recovery of Zion, the City of David.

2. In the course of this despatch I have the honour, with the advantage of hindsight and with some humility in view of my lack of foresight, to give some picture of what led up to these shattering happenings. For over two weeks before the 5th of June, I had been reporting daily, sometimes even hourly, the course of events here. It is not therefore my intention to try and recapitulate all that happened—there are already so many trees to be counted that one is liable to lose sight of the wood itself. All I can do is to read once more through the mass of telegrams, minutes and reports, then close them, forget them and, after a pause, set down in a highly impressionistic way what is left in my mind of the general trends which led to these cataclysmic (from a Middle Eastern point of view) events.

3. For the last year we seemed to have been occupied mainly with the threat to Middle East peace posed by the Israel/Syria situation. There were countless incidents attributable to the new Syrian doctrine of waging a continual proxy war against Israel. The Government of Mr. Eshkol, because of their fear of the Soviet Union, were extremely chary of yielding to popular demand to teach the Syrians a good lesson once and for all. This Government attitude gave rise to the totally irrelevant aberration of the Samua raid (which nevertheless may have had its lasting and traumatic effect on the subsequent peculiar behaviour of King Hussein). Even the total incompetence of the Syrian Air Force as illustrated on the 7th of April and the failure of any Soviet reaction did little to remove general Government fears about the Soviet/Syrian threat. Indeed, if one is to try to pinpoint any single event which started off the whole train ending with the cease-fire of the 10th of June, it is perhaps Mr. Eshkol's speech of the 13th of May. I am sure this was intended as a deterrent measure, lest customary terrorist activities over the Independence Day celebrations might once again renew unwelcome pressures on Mr. Eshkol to allow a fairly large punitive operation. It succeeded in its short-term object, but it resulted in the activation of the Syrian/Egyptian Defence Pact, the Syrian accusation of large Israel troop concentrations on her borders

(supported for mysterious reasons *vis-à-vis* the Egyptians by Soviet sources) and the decision of the Egyptians to move considerable forces into Sinai with the maximum propaganda.

4. There follows what I would call the period of "Overtaken Intelligence Appreciations". The Israelis agreed with us that Nasser's new posture posed no real threat and was done for propaganda purposes only. They were even anxious lest King Hussein's constant needling of Nasser on the subject of UNEF and the Straits of Tiran might push him into actions he would otherwise not take. But events were rolling with their own momentum. Appreciations were only made to be overtaken by events. Would or could the Secretary-General of the United Nations allow UNEF forces to be pushed out? He had. As he explained privately to us later, he was motivated by fears for the safety of his forces at the hands of the Egyptians. But all that was heard from him in public at the time was a complaint of one incident involving the buzzing of a United Nations plane by the Israelis. Then there were doubts whether UNEF were actually being forced to evacuate Sharm el Sheikh, followed by speculation whether Nasser would actually occupy the point himself. The next questions were whether, having occupied it, he would announce the closure of the Straits of Tiran to Israel shipping and then whether, having announced the closure, he was really going to do anything about it. In all these cases preliminary assessments were unduly optimistic. By this time the Israelis had begun to realise that they and indeed most of the world had been caught flat-footed either, as Israel's Western friends seemed to think, as the result of an unforeseen chain of events, or, as the Israel intelligence began to suspect, as the result of a carefully-thought-out plan. It had always been one of the beliefs of your Department, Sir, and in this Embassy that the closure of the Straits of Tiran was likely to be an immediate *casus belli* and now the Israelis were suddenly faced with the actual situation. What would they do about it?

5. However optimistic had been the various intelligence appreciations of what was really going on, the Israelis and indeed other responsible Governments took precautionary steps. As early as the 18th of May there was a limited call-up in Israel of certain specialised and technical



categories as the result of Egyptian moves into Sinai. The withdrawal of UNEF led to a much more extensive mobilisation on the night of the 20th of May. As it became apparent that the occupation of Sharm el Sheikh might well lead to hostilities, the United States Government and Her Majesty's Government issued warnings to casual visitors to the Middle East to leave. By the afternoon of the 23rd of May it was clear that quiet but nevertheless much increased mobilisation measures were being put into force and from all the indications I had from various sources, both then and subsequently, an attack on Egypt was planned to take place at first light on the 24th of May. Meanwhile, however, heavy American pressure to leave it to the United States and to other Powers to secure the opening of the Straits had had its effect on the Government and it was decided not to fight but to send Mr. Eban to the United States to probe these possibilities further. My own instructions arrived after the Government decision had been taken, but there is no doubt that the news of the Prime Minister's intended Margate speech served a useful purpose in convincing the Israel Government that the United States was not alone in realising the gravity of the situation and in being prepared to do something about it.

6. We had got over one hump and another situation (in a series) had been created which made it politically difficult for the Israelis to take any action on their own. Although the possibility of some successful Syrian terrorist action still hung over us, the problem had become concentrated on the Straits of Tiran, to which all eyes were turned. There followed a considerable period when our main pre-occupation was lest the Israelis might seek the desired showdown with Egypt by means of some small incident involving the passage of an Israel ship through the Straits, an Egyptian response and a massive Israel counter-response. The Israel Army and their highly efficient intelligence services were, however, thinking about other matters. They observed the reinforcements and consolidation of the Egyptian tanks and aircraft in Sinai. They realised that in the event of a fight with Egypt it was inevitable that they would have to fight on a second front with Syria. They saw the "reasonable" Arabs like King Faisal and King Hussein becoming ensnared in the

triumphant progress of the Nasserite bandwagon. They knew that the 23rd of May was about the last date on which they could have caught the Egyptians more or less unprepared and they saw the basic Israel advantages of surprise and the ability to mobilise and deploy rapidly becoming whittled away with each day that passed. They began to see that another situation was imperceptibly arising, which again the Foreign Office and this Embassy had always considered a possible *casus belli*: the effective united large-scale build up of Arab armies designed to attack Israel. Morale among the public began to decline. The economic consequences of maintaining a large scale mobilisation were beginning to be discussed. The diplomatic interlude merely served to increase the feelings in the army of frustration and disillusionment with the political leadership. They still had no doubts about their abilities to take on all comers, but they felt that political delays were liable to increase military difficulties, casualties and the safety in war of the civil population. It is from this period that the demand began to be expressed for greater leadership and more decisiveness in the Government, which was to end in the appointment of General Dayan as Minister of Defence. Meanwhile we in this Embassy were busy watching the situation in the Straits of Tiran like a terrier at a rat hole.

7. The next hump was already visible. Would Mr. Eban bring back enough to satisfy the Israel Government that her interests in the Straits of Tiran could be preserved by other friendly Powers and that Israel did not have to take unilateral action? In view of the feelings of the 200,000 or so voters in the army, the gloomier intelligence appreciations of the situation in the Arab world and the Government's own awareness of its growing unpopularity for inaction, it looked as if the decision was bound to be a fairly close-run thing. On the assumption that Israel military action would have to take a surprise and pre-emptive form; becoming increasingly apprehensive that our appreciation that Nasser did not want a war and therefore would not move first himself might be becoming invalid; and knowing that once hostilities had started the air battle would close down possibilities for civil transport, I decided on the evacuation of dependents of this Embassy.

8. The crucial Cabinet meeting to hear Mr. Eban's case was on the 28th of May.



My American colleague and I were using every argument we could to try and ensure the decision went the right way. In the event it did. In an interview I had with Mr. Allon, the Minister of Labour, immediately after the Cabinet decision, he seemed satisfied that the right course had been taken. But he gave me strong indications again that it was not really the question of the Straits of Tiran which was worrying the Israelis. It was the overall picture. Nasser was moving his armour in a way which suggested Eilat might be his target. He also stressed the importance of the air battle.

9. Since this latter must have played such a vital role in the final Israel decision to strike, perhaps I may be excused if I make some of the salient points which both we and the Israelis have all along had in mind. Israel has one of the most efficient air forces in the world, but it only has four main aerodromes off which to operate and these are in fairly close proximity to each other owing to the geographical formation of this tiny country. Israel also has a highly concentrated urban nexus placed square in the narrowest part of her territory—at one point only 9 miles wide. The Arabs, and in particular the Egyptians, had numerically superior forces and the Egyptians had numerous and widely scattered air bases with most of their bombers (a commodity Israel does not possess) situated in air fields well to the south and near to the Sudanese border. The Israelis could possibly hope to match by superior skill the united Arab Air Forces in the air, but they would take severe losses and there was bound to be some penetration of the urban nexus by Egyptian bombers with resulting civilian hardship. It was therefore obvious that in the event of any type of hostilities with Egypt which went beyond a border clash, the Israelis would have to strike first at the Egyptian airfields in order to stop, completely if possible, the capability of the Egyptians to put their superior and more damaging air force into the air. The converse is equally true, that Israel simply could not afford to allow a first Egyptian strike against her limited airfields. We now know that Nasser was talking of forcing the Israelis into a war but insisting that they must strike first, as though the avoidance of "aggression" as Rule One in the United Nations Warden were some sort of talisman which would bring ultimate salvation or victory. The fact that Nasser's

approach made utter military nonsense in terms of modern warfare cannot really have been foreseen by the Israelis who must have assumed that the Egyptians, with their Russian advisers, must have had at least some rudimentary commonsense. Over a year ago I advised your department that my appreciation was that in the event of hostilities with Egypt the Israel Air Force would have to take action at D minus 5 minutes. In my conversation with Mr. Allon he fairly well confirmed this theory. As one journalist later put it to me, it was like the Western film where the more intelligent hero could not even afford to watch the gun hand of the fast-drawing villain, but watched his eyes for the flicker in them that would indicate that his gun hand was about to move.

10. Externally there followed the period of the steps to organise an International Maritime Declaration or, possibly even, Force. I myself had been rather surprised to gather from Mr. Eban that he thought this period might run into weeks. His estimation was certainly out of tune with what the Israel public felt and certainly what the army felt. The very decision to go for a diplomatic solution had heightened the sense of frustration and put the Israel intelligence services in a state of near despair as they hourly plotted the ascending graph of the Arab potential. Internally this meant that the Government finally had to give way to pressure to include General Dayan in the Cabinet, not only as a sop to the army but as a sop to public opinion as a whole. It really made little difference to overall Government policy, but just as Nasser had to seek his talismans in concepts of the United Nations Charter, so too did the Israel public and army have to have its one-eyed (and far from yellow) idol. It is perhaps typical of Israel political life that this event could not come about without the most agonising contortions among the parties and the political machine as a whole.

11. King Hussein's sudden rush to Cairo, his embrace of Nasser and the certainty that Jordan would now in some way become involved in the fight, caused no major public flutter. Once again the feeling was that this was something that had to happen, it was largely political and it did not really matter very much though it was thought rather surprising that the King had had to go to quite such lengths to demonstrate that he too was a loyal member of the United Arab Command. This was not, however,



the feeling in the Israel intelligence services or in the heart of General Narkiss (Commander of the Central Front) who was expected to hold his long frontier against Jordan attacks with about two brigades. He was given some solace by the strengthening of his command with a little more armour and one extra weak brigade formation. Generally speaking, however, the hope still was that King Hussein, if he had to fight at all, would fight a sort of politico-military war and would do nothing really foolish. Looking back, it now seems rather surprising to me that in the welter of good advice and pressure to which the Israelis were subject, as far as I know, at no time did anyone think of speaking severely to King Hussein about the lunacy of his actions or warn him against attacking Israel seriously. It was left to the Israelis to make a last-minute appeal to him, but by that time His Majesty was telling foreign Ambassadors that all he wanted was "to be left alone with the Israelis".

12. The major problem facing the Israel Government at this time, quite apart from the bitter pill of General Dayan, was how to maintain the necessary military readiness for what was obviously going to be a long haul, without damaging the economy of the country too badly. Committees were set up and sensible arrangements made to meet the situation. Politically the Government realised that they had again tied their hands, possibly even more firmly than before. Even General Dayan, quite honestly, in conversation with his brother-in-law and other generals who were chafing at inaction, was expounding the doctrine that it would not pay Israel at all to infuriate the Tall Texan by acting on her own when he was dealing with Israel's interests. On Saturday the 3rd of June large numbers of troops were released and the beaches were as crowded as Blackpool in the holiday season. But on the Saturday night the Israel Military Intelligence was at it again. This time they were worried about reports of Iraqi reinforcements on their way to Jordan and Syria, the possibility of Jordanian troops being placed under Egyptian command and arrangements to fly two battalions of Egyptian commandos to Jordan. They had woken up to the fact that they were now probably facing a third *casus belli* which we had always feared—a Nasserite-controlled Jordan. Like the other preceding events things had come about in a very un-clearcut way. The

presumption had always been that the gallant little King might lose his throne and that a Government totally hostile to the West (and even more so to Israel) would be in command of the West Bank. It was suddenly appreciated that militarily this was what, in fact, had happened although the previous political outward trappings were still there. There was a further Cabinet on the Saturday night which was inconclusive. Fear of the Tall Texan still won the day. It was for the intelligence services to try and demolish this last obstacle.

13. On Sunday the Cabinet met again and General Yariv, the Director of Military Intelligence, who has told me since that by this time he was the most unpopular man in Israel with the politicians, gave the performance of his life. He explained the great gravity of the new Jordanian threat which would be even worse after the Iraqi brigades arrived. He expounded the dangers of the overall Arab threat drawing extensively on intelligence he had about Egyptian thinking and planning, together with even more significant moves in the shape of tank concentrations. These looked as if Nasser might well be contemplating pre-empting Western efforts to get the Straits of Tiran opened by taking the port of Eilat and therefore rendering the whole question nugatory. He exposed that the diplomatic effort was getting nowhere. I understand Mr. Eban had some embarrassing moments in explaining quite how long the timetable was likely to be—apparently he was less than precise about this in the Cabinet of the 28th of May. Finally Yariv gave an analysis of every piece of information available to him indicating American thinking at all levels. He succeeded in persuading the Cabinet that President Johnson might well not be nearly as angry, if the Israelis took action, as the Israel Cabinet itself thought.

14. The inclusion of Messrs. Beigin, Dayan and Saphir in the Cabinet at this stage was really an irrelevance. Dayan could certainly have been relied on to have supported the military appreciation of the gravity of the threat and the military need to take some sort of action. Basically, however, he did not have to work very hard to convince his colleagues. The overriding military arguments were reinforced by an acceptance that the political disadvantages were perhaps not as grave as they had been thought to be. I assume also that the decision once taken, it was decided to



implement it immediately, thereby regaining to a large extent the element of surprise and illustrating once again, if it needs to be done, the advantage of the short interior lines of communication of this country and the efficiency of the call up procedures which had now had almost three weeks' running-in period. The soldiers on leave were almost invisibly whisked back to their units in the course of Sunday afternoon.

15. When the air raid sirens went at 8 o'clock on Monday morning there was nobody in Tel Aviv who did not think they were merely a practice. They went again about 40 minutes later with no all clear in between, but this was because those responsible had not yet perfected how to differentiate between an alert and an all clear! Certainly nobody knew that the war had started and even the preliminary communiqués indicated little more than a somewhat outsize-scale armoured clash to the south of Gaza. My first reactions, when I knew the war had started, were to feel that quite apart from the brilliance of the military campaign, which I was sure would follow, an even greater feat had probably been in a deception plan unparalleled in history which had probably gone on for days.

16. Perhaps this is still the case and it would certainly be interesting to think so and to try and analyse the scope of this plan. But I do not believe it really. Things were much more simple than that. My American colleague and myself and the other diplomats in Israel are unfortunately not party to Israel Cabinet proceedings, but I am certain, along with my other colleagues, that as late as Saturday night there was no decision to go to war. What passed on Sunday we were not aware of until later.

And what passed on Sunday was the convincing of the Israel Cabinet that Israel was faced with a situation incorporating no less than three elements each of which in previous days would have been considered a *casus belli* on its own. This was coupled with an appreciation that neither the Russians nor the Americans would move militarily and that the latter, who were much more of a deterrent to Israel action than the Russians, were unlikely, for a variety of reasons, to react too strongly. All that was left to be seen was the answer to the questions the army had been asking ever since they had become restricted by world diplomatic activities—"How long have we got? Can we at least have 48 hours?" It was to meet this question that the real deception plan was entered upon. Maybe here one can see the hand of Moshe Dayan. At any rate it succeeded, helped by the ineptness of Israel's adversaries in their response and Israel got more than twice its 48 hours. This is really a subject for inclusion in a further despatch on the actual military operations which I have the honour to be preparing parallel with this present effort.

17. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives in Amman, Ankara, Bahrain, Beirut, Bonn, Jedda, Khartoum, Kuwait, Moscow, Nicosia, Paris, Rabat, Tehran, Tripoli, Tunis and Washington; to the United Kingdom Representative at the United Nations in New York; to Her Majesty's Consul-General, Jerusalem; to the Commander, British Forces, Near East; and to the British Interests Section in Algiers.

I have, &c.

R. M. HADOW.





CONFIDENTIAL

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
TEL AVIV.

✓  
Despatch No. 18

(1091/67)

29 June, 1967.

The Second Arab-Israel War, 1967  
The Preliminaries

S U M M A R Y

1. Paragraphs 1 & 2 This is an impressionistic despatch which tries to get through the mass of paper of a fortnight which only shows how wrong I was.
2. Paragraph 3 The trouble with Syria which occupied us for the previous year and probably led up to what happened.
3. Paragraphs 4 & 5 The events up to the 23rd of May which should normally have led the Israelis to hit the Egyptians then.
4. Paragraphs 6, 7 & 8 The international preoccupation with the question of the Straits of Tiran, what was going on inside Israel and how we again stopped the Israelis going.
5. Paragraph 9 The vital importance to either side of the first strike.
6. Paragraphs 10 & 12 Again internal politics and the growth of the problem.
7. Paragraph 11 (sic) Why the Jordanian behaviour really counted.
8. Paragraphs 13, 14 and 15 The moment of truth.
9. Paragraph 16 A rather feeble apologia and some hindsight.

P.S. I realise that this despatch contains what may be considered to be criticisms of "Intelligence appreciations". I would like to stress that I am in no way pointing at any British organisation. I am talking about them, the Israelis and very largely this Embassy and myself.

CONFIDENTIAL



3

CONFIDENTIAL

3

Cypher/Cat A

PRIORITY TEL AVIV TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Telno 781 7 July, 1967

CONFIDENTIAL

My despatch No. 19. <sup>2</sup>

TOP COPY

RECEIVED ARCHIVES No. 13 22 JUL 1967 ER2/16
--

On reconsideration and in light of subsequent collation of material, paragraph 6 is loosely drafted and faulty as regards timing. Please amend to read as follows:-

"6. At first only holding operations were possible in the Tulkarm and Kalkilya sectors with the weak Israel forces immediately available on that front. But one Israel brigade from Northern Command (Syrian Front) launched an attack in the afternoon from the North towards Jenin which was successful by nightfall. Its main job was to capture the high ground from which Jordan artillery positions in the Tulkarm and Kalkilya areas had kept up a steady bombardment for 24 hours. The thrust through Latrun took the high ground on the way to Jerusalem and Ramallah was occupied by the afternoon. After reinforcements," ... as before to end of paragraph.

Mr. Hadow

Sent 1020Z 7 July

Recd 1656Z 7 July

DEPARTMENTAL DISTRIBUTION

Eastern Dept.

uuuuu

CONFIDENTIAL

Pa  
UK 7/8



Confidential

ER 2/11

P/W

TFB

21/7

Tel Aviv Dispatch No 18

Sir R. P. Wright 1/20h

P: 12.5

in the air in front

Ph. 2/7

There is not much that is new in this, except the conclusion that there was not a deception plan but a genuine change of mind at the last minute by the Israel Cabinet's sanctioning of hostilities on Sunday which they had rejected on Saturday. Nevertheless, it is a useful summary of the course of events and worth reading in full.

Pa  
NR 20/7

TFB  
19/7



(19)

Reference... EE 2/16

Putter 11/7

Mr Moberly

Mr Morris has seen.

Mr Breckley - a separate copy has gone to Mr Breckley under

Mr Bequith 11/7 21/7 <sup>course of a minute</sup> Jan 18. VII

Mr Saunders 20/7

NEA ✓

Defence Dept 11/7 28/7

P U S ✓

Home 20/7

Pinelley 26/7

27/7

Mr Davidson 20/7

1 handwritten dispatch for printing and circulation to

FO/W(O)/WH distribution. with respect to

Mr Hadson's views I think his dispatch shows with

understanding of the difficulties confronting

King Hussein. He appears to accept somewhat

unreservedly the Israeli view of King Hussein

and his motives.

J. Crook

Mr Winchester 11. vii 31/vii  
Mr Montgomery 31/vii  
Mr Alston 31/vii  
Mr Mahinson 31/vii  
interested.

then p. 4 -

VR 31/7



(18)

Reference.....

ER2/16 (2)

Mulla ✓

Mr Wieschke  
~~Mr Bick~~  
~~Mr Montgomery~~  
~~Mr Stone~~

then p.a.

Mr Heberley

Mr Morris

Mr Breuchley

Mr Beavish MB 20/7

Mr Saunders 22/7

NEAD

PUSAP 3/3

NR 4/8

Done 25/7  
Final 26/7

27/7

1. I have sent a copy of this dispatch for printing.
2. I recommend that it should go forward for priority printing.
3. The reports referred to in paragraph 1 are attached.

J. Crook

15.vii

I agree that this merits priority printing  
FO/CO/WH. I have sent a copy to the P.O.S.

TFB  
19/7



(4)

TOP COPY

E

RECEIVED IN ARCHIVES No. 15 12 JUL 1967
ER2/16

CYPHER/CAT A  
PRIORITY TEL AVIV  
TEL NO. 796

TO FOREIGN OFFICE  
11 JULY 1967

[Dups (3) Eastern] *[Signature]*

CONFIDENTIAL.

MY TELEGRAM NO. 718: AMENDMENT OF PARAGRAPH 6 OF MY DESPATCH  
NUMBER 19.

FOLLOWING WAS OMITTED IN TRANSMISSION.

AFTER QUOTE FROM WHICH JORDAN ARTILLERY UNQUOTE PLEASE  
INSERT QUOTE COULD SHELL THE MAIN I.A.F. AIRFIELD  
AT RAMAT DAVID. AT DAWN ON THE 6TH OF JUNE ISRAEL  
FORCES TOOK LATRUN AND FANNED OUT FROM JENIN.

THE AIR FORCE AND GROUND FORCES SILENCED JORDANIAN  
ARTILLERY POSITIONS IN THE TULKARM AND KALKILY AREAS  
WHICH HAD KEPT UP A STEADY BOMBARDMENT FOR 24 HOURS  
UNQUOTE.

MR. HADOW

SENT 0825/11 JULY 1967

RECD 1320/11 JULY 1967

*Files Kerox Eastern Dept*

(8)

*1 File  
1 Bales  
3 AM  
T+1 RM*

*pg  
NR 7/8*



CONFIDENTIAL

(5)



(1093/67)

1072



W. Morris Esq., C.M.G.

*With the Compliments of*

*Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador,*

**AMMAN.**

(P G.D. Adams)

13.7.1967.

CONFIDENTIAL



(1093/67)

1072

British Embassy,

AMMAN.

13 July, 1967.

The Arab/Israel War

I have read with great interest your despatches Nos. 18 and 19 to the Foreign Office on the second (or was it the third?) Arab/Israel War.

2. In each of the despatches you mention a last minute Israeli attempt to persuade King Hussein to agree to a mutual arrangement of non-belligerency. Have you any details of this? It would be interesting to know whether you have any indication that the message ever got through to King Hussein; and how and when.

3. The Arabs, as you point out, have a great many blind spots in the area of their relations with Israelis. I think the Israelis have one too when they believe, or pretend to believe, that while it is perfectly natural for them to launch an attack on their neighbours it is astonishing and "foolish" that the Jordanians should show fight. Do you remember Samu?

4. In the view of my Service Attachés the Jordanian Army plan up to the outbreak of the recent fighting was strictly defensive, and it was largely due to the ill-conceived decision of the Commanding General, taken after fighting had started, to move over to the offensive that the Jordan army took such a beating (not the "Jordan Legion" incidentally; the Arab Legion was something else - a force primarily concerned with internal security). But King Hussein has never for a moment in the past harboured the thought that if there is a battle for Palestine his troops will not take a major part in it. That seems to be one lesson the Israelis did not learn and it astonishes me that they could really have thought that perhaps the Jordanians would not fight.

5. You will not expect me to go along altogether with your version of the War as seen from Amman, and I think I must have misled you on one point in particular. The King did not say that he wanted to fight Israel alone. What he meant was that the Arabs hoped there would not be foreign intervention on either side in the dispute. In other words, he was warning against escalation, a thought which has haunted him ever since Samu, if not longer.

His Excellency  
Mr. R.M. Hadow, C.M.G.,  
Tel Aviv.

(P.G.D. Adams)

CONFIDENTIAL

Copied to: W. Morris Esq., C.M.G. Eastern Department,  
C.P. Hope Esq., C.M.G., T.D. (UKMIS) New York.  
Washington.



CONFIDENTIAL

7. I am sorry about "Jordan Legion" in paragraph 7 of my despatch No. 19 - a bastard phrase if ever there was one, which slipped past me in one of the draft papers which formed a basis for the despatch. I hope however that we described the Jordan Army correctly in the rest of the despatches. It is, incidentally, another sign of Israel old-fashioned attitudes that the Jordan Army is always referred to here as "The Legion" (Ha Leggion), a term which embodies in it a certain amount of respect and affection even among the Israel military. This is a left-over from Jewish and Israel recollections of the good, clean show it put up "while primarily concerned with internal security" in 1948!

8. Your paragraph 5. I was only going on your telegram No. 789 when you and your American colleague seemed to be in the dog-house. I am afraid I did not realise King Hussein was talking about escalation when he said: "Leave us alone with the Israelis". Perhaps too superficially, I took it to mean that this time the Arabs hoped to be left alone to settle Israel's hash. At any rate, this is what happened and it was not long before the King was asking us to intervene (admittedly only politically) on his behalf. This gave me and my American colleague quite a busy, though frustrating and unsuccessful, time. It was because of my own involvement in this aspect of the matter that I felt justified, as I hope you will agree, in mentioning the matter.

9. I am sending copies of this letter to the recipients of yours.

(Michael Hadow)

CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL  
(1091/67)

⑥



ER2/16

4/8 Mr Morris

With the compliments of  
HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S  
AMBASSADOR

An Winkler

ps see  
at Page E  
White 2/8

W. Morris, Esq., C.M.G.,  
Eastern Department,  
Foreign Office.

TEL-AVIV

Mr Rafter  
Have we the  
reference  
Wm  
2/8

21 June, 1967.



CONFIDENTIAL

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
TEL AVIV.

(1091/67)

21 June, 1967.

The Arab-Israel War

Thank you for your letter of 13 July. I am glad you found these rather hurried efforts interesting. May I say in return, how much I enjoyed your despatch No. 13 and agreed with the conclusions you drew.

2. Yes. Second Arab-Israel war. The business in 1956 was a straight Israel-Egyptian war, when no other Arabs intervened at all; unless you give credit to the Syrians for shooting down one British Canberra on photo reconnaissance!

3. Your paragraph 2 was dealt with in my telegram No. 474, paragraph 5, which was sent on 5 June and repeated to you. Anyway I see from your telegram No. 883 that this has been cleared up to your satisfaction. Indeed, although they are fairly chary of talking about it, I also believe that an American channel was used either just before 5 June or early on 5 June itself to convey much the same message.

4. Your paragraph 3. I certainly do remember Samua and agree with you, as you will see from paragraph 3 of my despatch No. 18, that it may have had its lasting effect on subsequent events. Yet, we must remember that Jordan suffered some equally indefensible and savage Israel "reprisals", especially the Qalqilya affair, just before the Sinai campaign. King Hussein did not then feel it necessary to spring to Egypt's aid or act on a long-standing fear of an Israel take-over of the West Bank.

5. The Israelis do indeed have many blind spots about their Arab neighbours and especially Jordan, e.g. the general public affection for King Hussein before the war based on the belief that he was pro-Western and anti-Nasser and was therefore not really

/as

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~  
His Excellency P.G.D. Adams, Esq., C.M.G.,  
AMMAN.

CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

as hard on Israel as some of the other Arabs. This belief was not necessarily shared by some of the experts here, particularly military ones, as I pointed out in correspondence with Willy Morris some time ago. Another factor in Israel thinking, which in some ways we are responsible for, was the political belief that the rift between the pro-Western Arabs and the "progressives" was deep enough to ensure no real community of action. But again, I do not think the experts kidded themselves that on this occasion King Hussein could necessarily stand idly by. As I think you will have seen from quite a few of my telegrams before the war, they would have settled for a situation where King Hussein confined himself to a demonstration of force without actually doing any real damage to Israel - "fire off a lot of ammunition and issue communiques".

6. Your paragraph 4. To be logical, there certainly was a sort of ambivalence in the Israel approach. As you will see from my despatches, it was not so much the posture of the Jordan Army as the introduction of Iraqi brigades, Egyptian commandos and the appointment of an Egyptian commander which weighed heavily in the Israel military appreciation of the threat. Nevertheless, they seemed to hope, at any rate on the political level, that they could escape an actual military confrontation. I now know from Narkiss, the Commander of the Central Front, that even after the Jordanians started shooting on the morning of 5 June he was ordered, for political reasons, not to strike back. It was only an hour and a half later, as a result of his shrill yelps of anguish, that he had these orders rescinded. At any rate, whatever may have been the potential role of the Iraqis and the Egyptian commandos, the initial Jordanian shelling along the border and particularly of the New City in Jerusalem can hardly be described as "defensive". The view of my Service Attaches was that the Jordanian action made no real military sense - which Jordanian offensive action would have done, e.g. the classic armoured drive to cut the narrow waist of Israel. All it did was to infuriate the Israelis without achieving any real military results.

/7.

CONFIDENTIAL



*I have already  
replied about despatch No. 18.*



BRITISH EMBASSY,

TEL AVIV

RECEIVED IN  
ARCHIVE

24 August, 1967.

*E. Dehl.*  
*29/8*  
*NR 29/8*  
*Mr Mubed*  
*No further action, I think.*  
*29/8*  
*NR 31/8*  
*ER2/16*

Dear Denis,

I wrote to you on August 15 inquiring about the non-printing of my despatch No. 18 on the preliminaries to the recent Arab/Israel War.

2. A further slight embarrassment has now arisen as a result of this. As you know, relations between myself and Wally Barbour are pretty close and he is always very good about showing me telegrams and documents. I reciprocate, within obvious rules, but I do not usually show him my despatches until I receive them in print form. This is to safeguard my position to some extent, as I am then fairly sure that they are considered "respectable" enough for fairly wide circulation.

3. Day before yesterday he remarked to me that he had found Geoffrey Harrison's despatch No. 20, of which he had received a photostat copy from the State Department, convincing and interesting. He then showed me a photostat of a letter containing Kohler's comments on it. He produced Geoffrey's despatch as well and showed me that his photostat copy had been clipped together in error to contain two pages number one and no page number two. He asked if I could remedy the defect, and I have subsequently given him a photostat of page two.

4. Finally, however, he said "Why have you been holding out on me on that despatch No. 18 of yours which Geoffrey mentions?" I somewhat lamely pointed out that I had not yet received a print copy, as there had been considerable delay in processing the mass of documents engendered by the Middle East crisis, but offered to let him see a roneoed original version in my office. He has since taken me up on the offer and remarked that he agreed with every word I had said!

/5.

Sir Denis Allen, K.C.M.G., C.B.,  
Foreign Office.



8

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON

28 August, 1967.

PERSONAL CONFIDENTIAL & GUARD

I was sorry to see from your letter of 24 August to Denis Allen that you were embarrassed by the fact that Wally Barbour was sent a copy of Geoffrey Harrison's despatch No.20 containing its reference to your own despatch No.18. Since this is perhaps in part my fault I feel I owe you a word of explanation. Geoffrey Harrison's despatch happened to reach my desk here late in the evening before Pat Dean had an appointment with Foy Kohler the following morning which was to deal with other business, but at which he wanted to draw him out about Soviet intentions in the Middle East. Since Geoffrey Harrison's despatch provided an admirable peg for this I quickly had a copy made and took it down personally to Kohler first thing in the morning so that he would have time to read it before the Ambassador's call. I did say quite clearly at the time that the copy was for Kohler's personal information, although I realised that he would undoubtedly show it to other people in the State Department. It never occurred to me that he would send copies out to posts overseas, and, indeed, it is the normal working arrangement here that if we do show the State Department copies of despatches or telegrams, this is on the basis that they are not sent outside Washington. Obviously if this were done there could often be an undesirable play-back at the post concerned. Perhaps I ought to have made it clearer to Kohler that it was not the intention that he should distribute Geoffrey Harrison's despatch to posts.

2. I assume that all is well now that you have shown Wally Barbour your despatch. I might add that we here see no reason for you to be embarrassed at having held out on Barbour although we saw quite a lot of him when he was in Washington, he was unbelievably cagey and although he saw the Ambassador privately on the very evening of the day when the decision must have been taken to encourage Hussein to go it alone in negotiating with Israel, he gave not the faintest hint of this in anything he said. However, perhaps this was not his fault.

(J.E.Killick)

R.M.Hadow, Esq., C.M.G.,

TEL AVIV.

PERSONAL CONFIDENTIAL & GUARD



Costen Dehl

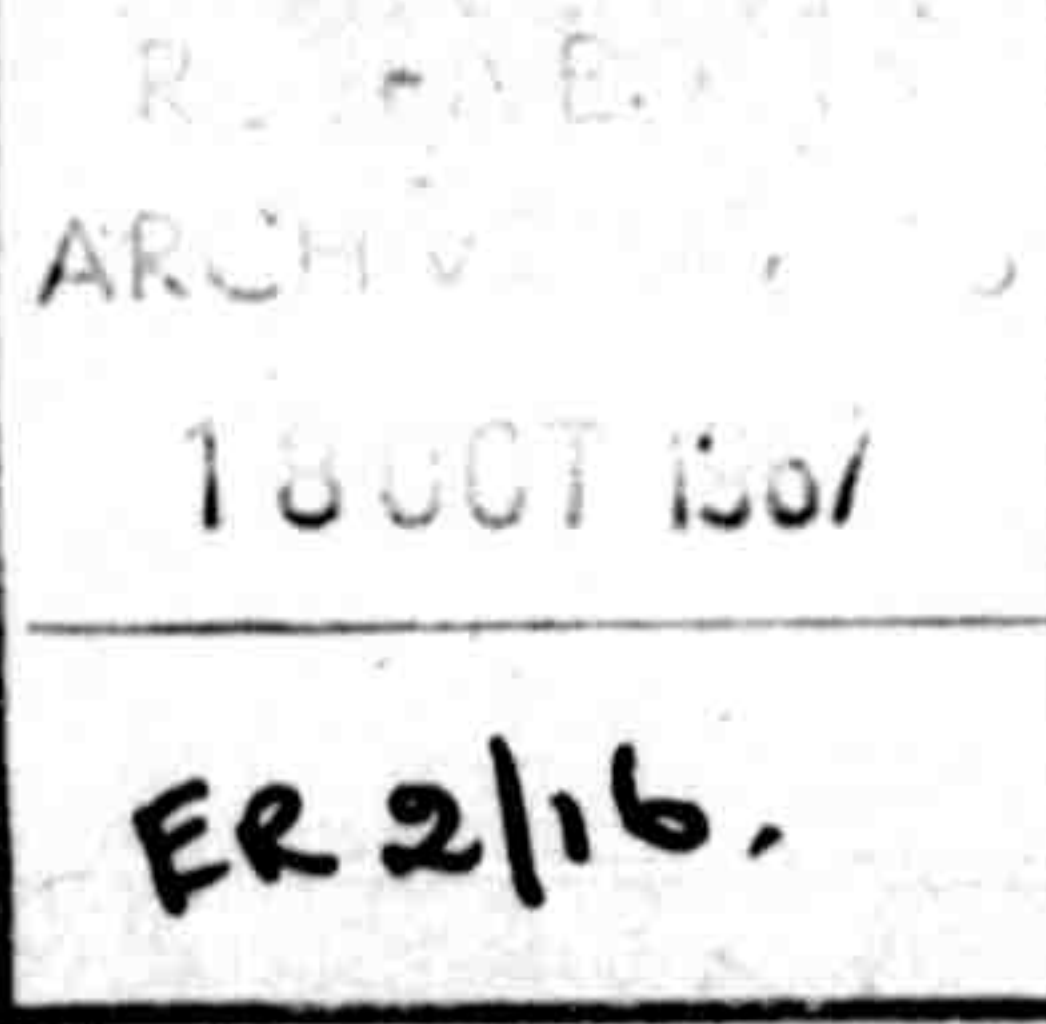
What reply please?



PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

Pa  
UR 18/10

(9)



BRITISH EMBASSY,  
TEL AVIV.

15 August, 1967.

Dear Denis,

We received in the bag before last the printed version of my despatch No. 19 which was the second part of two despatches describing what led up to the Arab/Israel war and the war itself. But the first, and in many ways most important, part (my despatch No. 18) has not yet reached us in print form. I may be wrong, but I can only surmise that it has not been printed.

2. I wonder if I could be told the reasons why my despatch No. 18 was not put into print? I should have thought it would have been of general interest for people to have had the assessment from this post of the events of the three weeks which led up to the actual outbreak of fighting. I have heard from some of the recipients of the despatch how interesting they found it and Geoffrey Harrison mentions it in his despatch No. 20 from Moscow. It is of course also mentioned at the beginning of my despatch No. 19. So if it is not printed there will be quite a lacuna in the records of all Foreign Office posts who received the latter but not the former.

3. This is the third time a despatch of mine on a matter of major importance has been suppressed. The first was my despatch No. 42 of September 15, 1966 about the opening of the new Knesset. It drew a sharp reaction from Willie Morris who seemed to think that I was in some way getting at him. I admit it was a fairly light hearted piece and dealt somewhat facetiously with the terrible tangles we get into in trying to maintain the position whereby we do not recognise the New City of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. After having dealt with the question myself since about 1955 it was interesting and instructive to see from this end in 1966 the tangles we get into and I would have thought there was a certain moral to be drawn from this despatch. I accept however that

/it

Sir Denis Allen, K.C.M.G., C.B.,  
Foreign Office.

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL





PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

it might have given rise, in posts all over the world where it was seen in print, to some questioning among the uninitiated as to where exactly our policy of being so ultra careful about Jerusalem was getting us, either in terms of popularity with the Arabs or in terms of dealing with the difficult Israelis.

4. The second despatch which was suppressed was my despatch No. 56 of December 21, 1966 about the aftermath of the famous Samua raid. I simply cannot make out why this was not considered worthy of print, especially in view of the alacrity with which Amman despatch No. 19 dealing with the same subject was circulated in print all round the world. I think the conclusions in that despatch are still probably justified, i.e. that it was the beginning of a general lack of confidence in Mr. Eshkol's fitness to be the Prime Minister. This is still the case although he has probably been saved temporarily by the successful outcome of the war this year. Nevertheless he can never be quite the same man again in public estimation.

5. I know, from my experience in Paris, how annoying it is for the Office to have Ambassadors continuously raising the question of the printing of their despatches. In the present case, I find it particularly disheartening that one's efforts have been rejected for the third time. Indeed, since the failure of the despatch on Samua to appear in print, the net result has been to wonder whether it is worthwhile putting much effort into giving a reasoned analysis of events after they have happened. In fact, we rather went off writing despatches altogether. I wonder therefore if you could cheer us all up a bit in this Embassy by getting my despatch No. 18 printed, or, at least, if there are over-riding objections to it, letting us know what was wrong with it so that we can learn from our mistakes.

*Yours ever*  
*Michael*

(Michael Hadow)

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL



PERSONAL CONFIDENTIAL & GUARD



29 August, 1967.

*With the compliments of*  
**THE BRITISH EMBASSY**

Mr. J. E. Killick

*Easton Dept.*  
*11/2/68*  
*30/7/8*  
*Intelligence*  
*1cm.*

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Sir Denis Allen, K.C.M.G., C.B., 31. viii  
FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.



PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

ER 2/16

TEL AVIV DESPATCH NO. 18

Sir D. Allen

Flags A  
and B

Flag C

I submit a draft reply to Mr. Hadow's letter of 15 August. At Flags A and B are Mr. Branchley's recommendations that both Despatches should be sent for priority printing. The P.U.S.'s agreement to priority printing for Despatch No. 19 is recorded in Mr. Wright's minute of 20 July at Flag B. Although in his minute of 19 July at Flag A Mr. Branchley agreed that Despatch No. 18 merited priority printing, in his separate minute of 19 July which went forward to the P.U.S. he did not mention this question.

2. Distribution of Despatch No. 19, which accordingly had received priority printing, was finished by 31 July, while distribution of Despatch No. 18, which was not given priority, was not completed until 17 August.

3. Eastern Department are doing some research into the fate of Mr. Hadow's Despatch No. 42 of 15 September, 1966, and No. 56 of 21 December, 1966, and will submit further on these with a further draft reply to the points made in his letter of 15 August about these two Despatches, if this seems appropriate. It may be that the subject would best be left to rest on the attached draft.

A.R. Moore  
(A.R. Moore)  
24 August, 1967.

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL



NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

Registry  
No.

DRAFT Submission

Type 1 +

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

Top Secret.  
Secret.  
Confidential.  
Restricted.  
Unclassified.

To:—

Sir R. Beaumont

Sir D. Allen

From

J.C. Moberly

Telephone No. & Ext.

Department  
Eastern

PRIVACY MARKING

.....In Confidence

Tel Aviv Despatches Nos. 42 of 15  
September and 56 of 21 December  
1966

I <sup>submit</sup> ~~attach~~ a draft reply to Mr. Hadow's letter  
of 15 August.

2. ~~I submitted a draft reply to cover his first~~  
<sup>Mr Morris</sup>  
~~two paragraphs under cover of my submission of~~

24 August (copy attached)

3. Mr. Morris wrote to Mr. Hadow on 17 October  
1966 setting out our differences on points of  
substance with Mr. Hadow's despatch No. 42 of 15  
September. I agree with his minute of 11 October  
1966 that it would not be suitable in official  
correspondence to explain to Mr. Hadow how his  
tilting at "the experts" missed the mark, and that  
the decisions against which he was arguing had  
been taken by Foreign Office Ministers after  
intervention by the Prime Minister.

4. It was fully intended to print Mr. Hadow's  
despatch No. 56 of 21 December and we have to admit  
that it was a confusion between this Department  
and Printing Section which hindered the printing.  
The despatch was sent for printing on 11 January  
1967 and Printing Section had arranged to complete  
printing and distribution by 27 January. They  
returned it to the Department for <sup>insertion</sup> ~~addition~~ of Mr.

/ Hadow's

Flag A ---  
covered a draft reply  
to the first two paragraphs  
of Mr Hadow's letter,  
about his despatch No  
18 of 1967.

Flag B

Flag C

Draft ~~of~~ <sup>cleared</sup>  
by Printing Section  
11/1/67 25/8.



CONFIDENTIAL

Hadow's name, and by an unfortunate oversight the despatch remained in Eastern Division instead of being returned to Printing Section. <sup>(Although)</sup> The Department, ~~however~~, had occasion to inform Printing Section of an amendment on 13 February but this unfortunately did not bring to light the fact that the despatch had not been returned. I am discussing this with the Head of Printing Section so that we can be sure that this sort of error does not again go undiscovered. ~~5. The despatch is now being printed and distributed under cover of the following notice:~~

~~"This despatch was intended for printing and distribution together with Jordan Despatch EJ 1015/119 of 15 December 1966 also reporting on the aftermath of the Israel attack on Samua. It is regretted that distribution has been delayed."~~

5. I have now sent the despatch for printing for Volume.

(The officer of Printing Section who dealt with the amendment has been on sick leave since April.)

5. I now recommend this despatch for priority printing and ~~distribution~~  
Fg/CO Q/W4  
distribution

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

CONFIDENTIAL



Registry  
No.

DRAFT Letter

Type 1 +

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

Top Secret.  
Secret.  
Confidential.  
Restricted.  
Unclassified.

To:—

R.M. Hadow, C.M.G.,  
TEL AVIV

From

Sir D. Allen

Telephone No. & Ext.

Department

PRIVACY MARKING

.....In Confidence

Tel Aviv Despatches Nos. 42 of  
15 September and 56 of 21 December  
1966

I have to begin with a very sincere apology from the Office that your despatch No. 56 of 21 December 1966 has still not been printed. This is due solely to a confusion between Eastern Department and Printing Section. We are looking into this to make sure that such an error could not again go undiscovered. I fully understand your feeling of frustration that you had had no explanation of how this particular despatch had not been printed.

2. We are now arranging ~~priority printing~~ for this despatch ~~which will be distributed under cover of a notice apologising for the delay and explaining that it was intended for distribution together with Philip Adams' despatch on the same subject.~~

3. Willie Morris' letter of 17 October 1966 explained a number of points of substance from your despatch No. 42 of 15 September which we could not endorse. Had we printed the despatch and given it wide circulation we should have had to follow it up with distribution of a reply on these points. The two together would have made rather puzzling reading for most people in Whitehall.

to be printed for Volume. You had copied it to those most closely interested. Since the subject has been eclipsed by the recent hostilities, we do not, at this late stage, think that a wide distribution would ~~be~~ be appropriate.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

Ed. (3746)

/ 4.

CONFIDENTIAL



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4. Willie Morris also explained that any commentary on your version of the background of the Speaker's attendance at the Knesset Opening Ceremony would have involved a discussion of relationships between Ministers, and between Ministers and officials which was not suitable for official correspondence.

~~They were~~ so much the less suitable for print ~~to be~~ to be circulated around Whitehall. And again we felt that if we were not going to refute the errors in your despatch, we should not give them currency.

5. I hope that the facts that you will by now have received a print copy of your despatch No. 18 on the Arab/Israel war, and that there was no intention of not printing your despatch No. 56 of 21 December 1966 will remove your doubts about its being worth while to put effort into giving an analysis of events after they have happened. You may be cheered to know that Ministers who had seen your despatch No. 19 took the trouble to ring up to make sure that they would be getting a copy of No. 18 to read with it.

It would have been by

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

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11

FOREIGN OFFICE,

S. W. 1.

25 August, 1967

2/16)

*[Handwritten signature]*

Tel Aviv Despatches

Thank you for your letter of 15 August about the printing of your despatches.

2. Your very important despatches Nos. 18 and 19 of 29 June about the events leading up to the Arab/Israel war and the war itself were, of course, read with the greatest interest and appreciation here. We were particularly interested in your conclusion that there was probably not a deception plan but a genuine change of mind at the last minute on the part of the Israel Cabinet. In general we saw no reason to dissent from your views, though seeing events from this end we should perhaps have given rather more weight to the genuine difficulties facing King Hussein.

3. Both these despatches were sent promptly for printing for the full Foreign Office and Whitehall distribution, and both were specifically recommended for priority printing. In the event I am sorry to say that by an oversight your Despatch No. 18 did not receive priority treatment. You should by now have received your print copy. There was certainly never any intention that it should not be printed along with its companion.

4. I have asked the Department to look into the question of the earlier despatches you mention, which, of course, were both sent well before my own arrival here. In the meantime, I can assure you that we all value the contributions you have made and are making to our knowledge of the events in Israel and of Israeli thinking. I am glad you drew my attention to the regrettable and unintended delay over printing No. 18. You must certainly not feel discouraged from continuing the good work.

(Denis Allen)

R. M. Hadow, Esq., C.M.G.,

Tel Aviv.

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PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Registry  
No.

DRAFT LETTER

Type 1 +

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

To:—

R.M. Hadow, Esq., C.M.G.,  
Tel Aviv.

From  
Sir D. Allen

Telephone No. & Ext.

Department

Personal &

Top Secret.  
Secret.  
Confidential.  
Restricted.  
Unclassified.

PRIVACY MARKING

.....In Confidence

Tel Aviv Despatches

Thank you for your letter of 15 August about the printing of your despatches.

2. Your <sup>very</sup> important despatches Nos. 18 and 19 <sup>of 29 June</sup> about the events leading up to the Arab/Israel war and the war itself were <sup>of course</sup> read with <sup>the</sup> greatest <sup>and appreciation</sup> interest here. We were particularly interested in your conclusion that there was <sup>probably</sup> not a deception plan but a genuine change of mind at the last minute on the part of the Israel Cabinet. In general we saw no reason to dissent from your views, though seeing events from this end we <sup>perhaps</sup> should have given rather more weight to the genuine difficulties facing King Hussein.

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NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

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4. I have asked the Department to look into the question of the earlier Despatches you mention, In the meantime, I can assure you that we all value the contributions you have made and are making to our knowledge of events in Israel and of Israeli thinking. ~~In any event I very much hope that you will not be deterred from sending further despatches by any past misunderstandings over printing.~~

*of course  
which were  
both sent  
well before  
my own  
arrival here*

*I am glad you draw my  
attention to the <sup>regrettable and unintended</sup> delay over  
printing No. 18. You must  
~~certainly not~~ feel discouraged  
from continuing the good  
work.*

*Al's*

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

12

(ER2/16)

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

17 October, 1967.

In his letter ER 2/16 of 25 August Denis Allen wrote to you explaining the delay in printing your important despatch No. 18 which should have received priority treatment but did not.

2. We have now investigated the fate of your despatch No. 56 of 24 December, 1966, about the Samu raid, and have, I am sorry to say, uncovered a worse breakdown in the machinery. The despatch was sent for printing in the ordinary way, but unfortunately on being returned to the Department for some additional printing data, it was in error retained afterwards in Eastern Division until our present investigation. You are owed substantial apologies for this. We have issued new instructions which, should prevent a similar accident happening again. The despatch is being printed for the volume.

3. I can well understand that the treatment of your two despatches No. 56 of 1966 and 18 of 1967 following on the decision, for which Willie Morris provided the inward explanation in the first paragraph of his letter of 17 October last year, not to circulate your despatch on the opening of the new Knesset Building, should have given you the impression of a jinx at work. I trust that this explanation unsatisfactory though it is, will serve to give fresh heart to the Embassy's discouraged muse. How about an analysis of the current Anglo phobia in Israel?

(A.R. Moore)

R.M. Hadew, Esq., C.M.G.,  
Tel Aviv.

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Type 1 +

**SECURITY CLASSIFICATION**

**To:—**

**From**

**Top Secret.**  
**Secret.**  
**Confidential.**  
**Restricted.**  
**Unclassified.**

R.M. Hadwin Esq  
Tel Aviv

M. M. 502

Telephone No. & Ext.

Department

## PRIVACY MARKING

**In Confidence**

In his LMR ER 2/16 of

25 August Sir Denis Allen  
wrote to you explaining the delay  
in printing your important dispatch  
No. 18 which should have received  
prompt treatment ~~but~~ but did not.

2. We have now <sup>the 1st</sup> ~~the~~ investigating into what happened to your dispatch No. 56 of 21 December, 1966, about <sup>SAMU</sup> the same raid, have, I am sorry to say, <sup>uncovered</sup> ~~revealed~~ a worse breakdown in the machinery. There was no decision not to print the dispatch, ~~on the~~ contrary it was sent for printing.

**NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN**



in the ordinary way, but  
unfortunately the dispatch  
on being returned  
was sent back for 55

the Department for some

additional printing data, but  
it <sup>in error</sup> was retained

~~owing to a negligible lapse~~

~~remained~~ <sup>although</sup> in Eastern

Division until our present

investigation You are over  
substantive ~~but certainly~~  
bylogies.

~~once you are~~ ~~apology~~ for this.

We

~~and we have~~ <sup>issued new instructions</sup>  
~~since~~ ~~been~~ ~~contain~~

which, <sup>should</sup> ~~we hope~~, will prevent

~~from~~ a similar accident

happening again. The dispatch is

being printed  
for the volume.

3. I can well understand  
the treatment of you

~~that more two incidents~~  
two dispatches no 36 of 1966 and

18 of 1967

following on the decision ~~not~~

to circulate your dispatch

, for which  
Willie Harris provided  
the most explanation  
in the first paragraph of  
his letter of 17 October  
last year,

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN



Registry  
No.

DRAFT

Type 1 +

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

To:—

From

Top Secret.  
Secret.  
Confidential.  
Restricted.  
Unclassified.

Telephone No. & Ext.

Department

PRIVACY MARKING

.....In Confidence

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

I trust  
that this  
explanation  
is satisfactory  
though it  
will encourage  
you to serve  
the cause  
of peace  
more  
How about  
an analysis of  
the current  
Anglo phobia in  
Israel?

A.R. 17.  
13.6.

on the opening of the <sup>new</sup> ~~kn~~ west

Building, should have given

you the impression of ~~some~~  
just a work.

~~kind of conspiracy to suppress~~

~~your views, & even~~

→ In fact nothing could be

further from the truth. As

Sir Denis Allen made clear

in his letter, your reporting

is ~~wrong~~ in all phases of

the recent crisis has been of the

greatest value to us all here.

I am sorry my mistakes have

should have made it appear otherwise.



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Reference ER 2/16 with (12)

Mr Hadon's Dispatches

---

Mr. Moore / Nesher

Sir Denis Allen wrote to Mr Hadon on 25 August apologizing for the fact that owing to an oversight Mr Hadon's dispatch No. 18 on the preliminary to the Arab/Israeli war did not receive prompt treatment.

2. Mr Hadon mentioned two other dispatches which had according to him been suppressed:

(a) his dispatch on the opening of the new Arab Building last September;

(b) his dispatch on the Sarnu raid.

The ~~recent~~ dispatch was indeed suppressed and ~~not sent~~ but

Confidential / Mr Morris



Mr Morris explained this fully to  
Mr Hadwin in writing at the time and  
I do not think we need go over  
that ground again. On the other hand  
the same raid dispatch was not  
printed owing to a misunderstanding  
between the Department, the Division  
and Printing Section. Here we owe  
Mr Hadwin a further apology.

However, I do not think a further  
letter from Sir Denis Allen is needed,  
a letter from you would in my view  
meet the case and I attach a  
draft accordingly. I suggest  
that Mr Rutley's draft submission  
should remain on the file as a useful  
record of what went wrong.



3. Eastern Department, E. Division  
have been alerted to what happened.  
Revised instructions have been issued  
and we hope that there will be  
no repetition.

J. Mosby

14. X.

Draft to mail.

A.R. 17.  
16.10.

PR 79 - VR 18/10



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British Embassy,  
Tel Aviv.

Despatch No. 42

(1073/67)

16 November 1967. IN

ARCHIVES No. 15

20 NOV 1967

ER 2/16

Sir,

The Second Arab/Israel War, 1967

The Aftermath: Political

The general sense of euphoria and magnanimity which engulfed Israel on the morrow of victory has gradually given way to a growing sense of frustration as the peace which then seemed within grasp continues to elude her. The intervening months have been characterised by a hardening attitude towards the Arabs and increasing acrimony in Israel's relations with some of her former friends. I have the honour to review the developments which have led to this situation and to describe the prevailing mood in this country as it awaits the outcome of the current deliberations at the United Nations.

2. I noted at the end of my Despatch No. 19 that in modern wars "the losers have not really lost and the winners have not really gained. Certainly, the problems for the winners seem more difficult than those for the losers." The second part of this contention has so far proved all too well founded. Both internally and externally Israel has met with unexpected difficulties.

/The awkward,

The Right Honourable George A. Brown, M.P.,  
etc., etc., etc.,  
Foreign Office.

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The awkward, though valued, relationship with the Soviet Union has been broken. France, staunchest friend and ally, has deserted her. Her relations with Britain have deteriorated, as our inevitable need became apparent to redress our standing with the Arab states where our major interests lie. And, with the diversion of the West's attention to the problems of refugees, the future of Jerusalem, the fate of King Hussein and the continued closure of the Suez Canal, Israel sees the evaporation of some of the sympathy which supported her before and during the war. She is faced with the economic problems of the occupied territories as described in my Despatch No. 36. Although a successful underground movement has failed to materialise on the West Bank, Israel continues to face a military situation of frequent incidents on her present lines both with Jordan and with Egypt. The dangers of escalation, as shown by the "Eilat" affair, are ever present. Critical advice or exhortation from outside has touched a sensitive nerve and, as has inevitably happened in the past, Jewish stubbornness, self-righteousness and the sense of "Fortress Israel", have come to the top. In short the reaction has been predictably one of xenophobic defiance which has further alienated the opinion of some foreign governments, though possibly not yet of the Western World public at large.

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large. On the credit side there has been a noticeable growth of warmth in relations with the Federal German Republic and Rumania which, alone of the Eastern bloc, has shown herself willing to pursue a realistic but friendly policy towards Israel.

3. But if the war gave rise to special problems for Israel and failed to eradicate some of her old ones there were few Israelis who would have agreed in the immediate aftermath that the losers had not lost and the winners had not really gained. Israel went to war to break loose from what appeared a grave threat to throttle her. By her overwhelming victory she achieved this objective and more. She felt she had emerged as a power in her own right in the Middle East. She was indebted to no-one but herself for her victory. Neither the West nor the East had been involved: King Hussein's wish that the Arabs should be left alone with the Israelis (which the Israelis must have heartily endorsed had they known of it) had been fulfilled. Her enemies were so militarily crippled that it appeared virtually impossible for them to try any further confrontation for a long time to come. Her forces were in occupation of large areas of enemy territory, rendering obsolete the old Armistice Lines of dissension and conflict, and were established on easily defended ceasefire  
/lines.

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lines. There were, for the first time, many cards in Israel's hands to exchange for a durable peace with the Arabs. Crowning all this, the Old City of Jerusalem was in Israel's hands; the very consummation of Zionism and the fulfilment of the hope which had held the Jewish people together for close on two thousand years of exile.

4. The immediate reaction after the war was that, surely, this time the Arabs must have learned their lesson and that the real fruits of victory must lie in a lasting and durable settlement. The golden age was about to dawn; the Arabs would see, encouraged by West and East alike, the enormous advantages to them of peace and co-operation with Israel. Hand in hand the two branches of the Semites could march forward to transform the social and economic structure of the whole Middle East. So it was that, for a period, the Israelis showed every sign of being prepared to fall into what they would normally have considered the cardinal error of showing the maximum magnanimity to their conquered foes. I am confident that, if at this stage an Arab leader or Arab leaders collectively had come forward to say that they would like to negotiate a peace they would indeed have received the most generous terms, which apart from the return of territories would have involved the Israelis in large scale plans for economic co-operation, the settlement of the refugees and the general development of the Middle East. The one real casualty was King Hussein,

/whom

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whom the Israelis considered to have behaved in a highly treacherous and irresponsible manner, not only towards Israel, but towards his Western friends. For him it was a case of "Never bright morning again". Nevertheless, even here there was a tendency to co-operate with Western efforts to portray the showing of the Jordan Arab Army as having been far better than that of any of the other Arabs. (This was against the evidence of Israel's own military experts who considered that the only really decent fight was put up by the Egyptians in the area of the angle of the Gaza Strip and Sinai.) But if King Hussein had come forward at that time his tarnished image in Israel's eyes could have been rehabilitated. Only on one point must this paragraph be qualified and that is as from 7 June the return of the Old City of Jerusalem either to Jordan or to an international body was quite unthinkable to any Israeli, whose mood was and still is that he would die rather than give it up.

5. This happy period lasted roughly up to and into the meetings of the Special Assembly of the United Nations, which was accepted as a necessary, though slightly dangerous, entracte which had to be gone through before the real process of direct peace-making could be entered upon. The mood changed perceptibly during the Assembly, when it was felt that its main result was to give the Arabs time to recover from their initial shock, to

/receive

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receive encouragement in the shape of fresh injections of arms, and to avoid facing up to the issue which seemed so clear cut to the Israelis. An early and unpleasant surprise was the attitude of some of Israel's friends and particularly the United Kingdom with regard to Jerusalem. The story once more became current (which I have now seen reproduced regrettably and very recently in the Adelphi paper on the war by the Institute for Strategic Studies) that the withdrawal of British troops from Palestine was accompanied by a secret agreement between Mr. Bevin and King Abdullah which would give to the latter not only the territories allotted to the Arabs by the United Nations Partition Plan, but the whole of Jerusalem in violation of United Nations Resolutions. What else, said the Israelis, could account for this new-found British sensitivity over Israel-occupied Jerusalem, when Britain had acquiesced so quickly in the Jordan occupation and had never raised a protest against Jordanian negation of all Jewish rights in the Holy City? Bitterness was increased by the discovery of the wholesale desecration of Jewish graves and places of worship in the twenty years in which the Jordanians had been in occupation. Finally, though fortified by the failure of the Yugoslav Resolution and the success of the Latin American draft (itself a fairly unacceptable document to the Israelis) they found to their dismay that, broadly speaking, the

/world

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world community seemed tacitly to have accepted the thesis that it was too dangerous and therefore out of the question for any Arab leader or leaders to come forward to discuss peace with the Israelis. In short, a great part of the world was encouraging the Arabs to believe that they had not really lost while the Israelis had not really won. From this point the bubble of post-war euphoria seems to have burst and a harder line became apparent in both governmental and public thinking. Hope for Israel's co-operation in accepting back the "new" refugees began to dwindle as from this moment.

6. Mr. Eshkol's Government of all parties, which was brought together under wartime conditions, was singularly unsuited, in these indeterminate circumstances, for the prosecution of Israel's interests at the diplomatic level or for exercising her new-found responsibilities in the occupied areas. The Cabinet is sharply divided amongst itself and, under the Prime Minister's weak and indecisive leadership, lacks a sense of cohesion. Its members make contradictory statements and pursue conflicting policies. As Minister responsible for the military government of the occupied areas, General Dayan behaves very much as an independent ruler and brooks no interference by his colleagues, although he has now submitted to a certain degree of control over his public statements. The religious parties, from the outset, were the first to  
/adopt

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adopt "hawkish" attitudes based on the Bible. The circumstances of Israel's post-war problems have helped to bring to the forefront of the political life of the country the bid by the middle strata of Israeli-born political leaders, represented by General Dayan and Mr. Allon, to inherit the reins of Government from the immigrant generation of "old guard" politicians. This is a struggle which cuts across party lines and involves personal rivalries between various contenders for power and their followers. It has directly contributed to the progressively harder line adopted in official pronouncements over the last three months as Mr. Eshkol, Mr. Allon and General Dayan have each, in turn, sought to demonstrate that he can be a tougher Prime Minister than the others. It is a wry thought, but nevertheless a valid one, that in the unlikely event of the Arabs suddenly agreeing to direct negotiations, the Israel Cabinet would be caught completely off balance. The wrangling at the conference table would be as nothing to the dissensions within the Israel Government itself, which could well tear it apart. It is far easier for the Cabinet to show unity in intransigence.

7. Israel's highly questionable decisions on the conditions for the return of refugees from Jordan and the re-establishment of Jewish settlements in the Etzion Bloc (with its implications for a more general return of Jewish settlers to the

/West

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West Bank of Jordan) are a product of the basic weakness and lack of unity in the Government rather than of a carefully thought out policy for dealing with the areas under Israeli military occupation. They took no account of likely international repercussions nor of the possible Arab reactions. In neither case was the Government subjected initially to strong public pressure, but each short-sighted step as it was taken appears to have aroused considerable enthusiasm among an equally short-sighted press and public. Whether or not these decisions have reduced the prospect of a negotiated settlement with the Arabs must be a matter of opinion. The Israelis would argue that they have brought this prospect nearer by, in the case of the refugees, adding to King Hussein's internal problems and, as regards Etzion, putting him on notice that he had better hurry up if he wants to regain his lost territories.

8. As time has gone on, bringing a settlement no nearer, a body of opinion has emerged in Israel which favours holding on to the captured (or as they prefer to call them "liberated") territories for their own sake. Those who adhere to this point of view place no faith in any agreements made with the Arabs and believe that the strong right arm of Israel is the only guarantee of her security. They argue that the ceasefire lines are more tenable boundaries, militarily, than the pre-war frontiers; that they give

/Israel's

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Israel's defences much-needed depth and more than double the warning time in case of future air attacks on her cities; and that they place her forces in a position to deter further Arab aggression by threatening to move against Damascus, Amman or even Cairo. There are also others who, for religious, historical or nationalistic reasons, would strongly oppose any proposal to retreat from any of the occupied territory. Both these streams of thought have found expression in the recent formation of an organisation calling itself "The Movement for the Entire Land of Israel", which embraces many prominent Israelis from all walks of life, and is actively campaigning on a non-party basis for public support. It is my impression that this movement is beginning to gather increasing support in the country and that it may well have its sympathisers in the Cabinet.

9. But, for the time being, official policy expresses a willingness to enter into direct negotiations with the Arab States, either collectively or individually. The terms on which the Israelis envisage that a settlement might be reached have never been explicitly spelt out, but they would almost certainly be based on the principle that Israel could only accept arrangements which gave her advantages at least comparable with those she now enjoys as a result of her occupation of captured territory. In the case of Jordan, Israel would be likely to insist on

/certain



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certain frontier adjustments to widen the Jerusalem corridor and the narrow waist of the Sharon Plain, the demilitarisation of that part of the West Bank which was returned to Jordan, and the retention of the whole of Jerusalem as part of Israel. On this last point, as I have said, there is no room for compromise in the Israelis' attitude. No Government could survive in Israel which dared contemplate a surrender of the Old City. While they may be prepared to concede some form of extra-territorial status for the Christian and Muslim Holy Places, they will make no concession on sovereignty. Equally, there would be willingness to come to some arrangement with Jordan over the division of the spoils of the tourist traffic, but the generosity of the terms likely to be offered dwindles with each week that passes.

10. Israel's terms for a settlement with Egypt would involve the retention of the Gaza Strip, the demilitarisation of the Sinai Peninsula, and guarantees of freedom of navigation through the Straits of Tiran and the Suez Canal. For Israel, passage through the Canal is important only from a prestige point of view, and she might be prepared not to press this point if an agreement acceptable to her in all other respects could be reached. The possibility of any settlement with Syria seems for the present to be academic. Israel would expect to remain on the Golan Heights and only to withdraw her forces under arrangements

/which

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which permanently removed any Syrian threat to the settlements in the Hula Valley and on the eastern shore of Lake Galilee.

11. In assessing the prospects of reaching a settlement with the Arabs, the Israelis' analysis of Arab psychology differs fundamentally from ours. They believe that experience has taught them that any show of magnanimity will be interpreted as weakness and any hint of flexibility as lack of purpose. They believe that if they stand firm on their conquests the Arabs will sooner or later be forced to reach an accommodation with Israel. They can see no good coming out of activities at the United Nations designed to bring about an internationally imposed solution, since they are convinced that these activities only encourage the Arabs to go on deluding themselves that they can recover by diplomatic means what they lost by war without ever having to face up to a real peace with Israel. It would suit Israel best if the present session of the United Nations General Assembly were to end, like the last one, with negative results. She has no wish to have her own hands tied by a Security Council resolution, nor any confidence that such a resolution, however "balanced", would be faithfully observed by the Arabs, or properly policed by the United Nations.

12. Against this background, British efforts to work for a resolution in the Security Council are viewed with the

/gravest



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gravest misgivings and have aroused a great deal of hostile criticism in Israel. The impression created in October by reports from New York was that it was the British delegation who were forcing the pace. All the latent Israeli suspicions of British motives in the Middle East have since come to the surface. Our actions are seen as indicative of a change to a more pro-Arab policy designed to serve short-term British interests in the Arab world at the expense of our relations with Israel.

13. The announcement of your intention of seeking a restoration of diplomatic relations with Egypt was immediately criticised as being misguided at a time when President Nasser's stock is all but depleted. Israelis said it would merely increase Egyptian intransigence and delay, rather than advance, the prospects of re-opening the Suez Canal. The Israel Government, while professing understanding of the problems created for Britain by the continued closure of the Suez Canal, have repeatedly made it clear that they have no intention of falling in with what they regard as Egyptian blackmail tactics, by agreeing to withdraw their forces from the east bank of the Canal in advance of an overall peace settlement. To withdraw even a short distance would be militarily difficult in view of the absence of lateral communications between their positions in Sinai except along the Canal itself, and would involve giving up the commanding

/advantages

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advantages they now enjoy of being able to keep Egyptian ground and air forces at a safe distance from their cities.

14. The Israelis are, however, probably not as worried by our activities in New York as the violence of recent local press reactions might suggest, since they seem confident that they can rely on the Americans to block any resolution in the Security Council which would require them to withdraw their forces from occupied territory without cast-iron guarantees that this would be accompanied or immediately preceded by Arab recognition and a renunciation of belligerency. Even without this safeguard, I have little doubt that Israel would unhesitatingly flout any resolution which she found unacceptable, unless this was backed up by the threat of certain and effective sanctions. She would not be deterred by considerations of world opinion, still less by any regard for the United Nations, an institution which she holds in contempt. (I think it was Mr. Eban who remarked not long ago that if the Arabs were to propose a resolution declaring that the world was flat, they would get forty votes for it immediately.)

15. The recent Israel press campaign against us was not simply an ill-tempered outburst engineered by the feeling that we were working against their interests at the United Nations. It reflects basic differences of attitude towards the problems of the Middle East. The Israelis

/have now

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have now, as a result of the last three months, come to attach more importance to security than to peace. They have little sympathy with our policy of bolstering up King Hussein who, when the crunch came, proved to be no less an enemy of Israel than President Nasser. It is of little consequence to them whether Jordan survives or is swallowed up by Syria or Iraq. Indeed, in some ways they would prefer an openly hostile regime in Amman since its influence would be less effective in Western capitals, and they would at least know where they stood. As for Egypt, the Israelis believe that unless he is rescued by the West, President Nasser is on the way out. They prefer to take their chance that his successor will be easier to live with.

16. Unless there is a breakthrough at the United Nations, or Jordan and Egypt open negotiations with Israel in the near future, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that Israel's frontiers will gell round the present ceasefire lines. I am bound to say that I find it difficult, given the current atmosphere in Israel, to see what effective pressure can be brought to bear to make the Israelis budge from these ceasefire lines in default of the kind of guarantees of their security which they demand. Seen from here, the only pressures which may force them to alter their position will be internal ones. In the short term, continued and successful Arab attempts at /sabotage

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sabotage and subversion might make Israel wonder whether retaining the West Bank was worthwhile. And in the long term, the more far-sighted are exercised with the question of whether the presence of anything up to one million additional Arabs in the occupied territories does not spell the end of the Jewish State. But neither of these pressures is likely to force Israel to act in haste. The security and military forces think that they are capable of rooting out all those Arabs who have connexions with terrorist organisations and believe that once this is done the West Bank population will no longer be afraid to co-operate with the Israel authorities. But even if the acts of sabotage continue I suspect that Israel will think very hard before she feels forced to relinquish the West Bank short of a peace treaty with Jordan, since the view generally held here is that, if terrorism is to continue, it is better that Israel should patrol the Jordan and have her civil and military authorities on the West Bank to search for the terrorists. This is considered preferable to returning to the pre-war situation which offered terrorists a salient protruding deep into Israel from which to conduct their activities, and a refuge to which they could return after they had done their business. As regards the Jewish character of Israel if the West Bank and its fast breeding Arab population are retained, this is a question which need not be faced up to immediately.

/It would

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It would take at least one generation before the threat of being eclipsed by the Arab population materialised, and since Israel at the present moment is concerned with her security in the immediate future she feels she can well afford to wait some time before turning her mind to this problem, which might be resolved in a variety of ways not involving the absorption of the Arabs as Israel citizens with voting rights.

17. In conclusion, the Israelis are not unduly worried by prognostications of a future and possibly "final round" by the Arabs. They appreciate, with what is probably supportable military expert thinking, that a pre-emptive air strike is not merely a question of getting up five minutes earlier than the other fellow. They discard the possibility of the Arabs ever reaching the operational and technological finesse which underlay the Israel Air Force's success at the outset of the Six Day War. They accept that they may well have to suffer far greater civilian casualties and damage, but they are confident that a first-strike by the Arabs could be frustrated even if one were mounted. Israel can therefore afford to sit on her present gains either until the Arabs see sense and negotiate their return, or until a further "round", when an Israel occupation of Amman, Damascus and Cairo could lead to a definitive end of the war and peace negotiations. All this rather facile approach is

/based





based on several dangerous assumptions: that the Soviet Union will never intervene actively and that there will continue to be a tacit understanding between the United States and the Soviets that the struggle for influence in the Middle East must be conducted within certain prescribed bounds: that local wars will remain conventional, or that Israel's ability to achieve a nuclear capacity first will serve as a deterrent to Arab nuclear ambitions: and finally (a rash assumption in view of the history of the Middle East over the last twenty years) that there will be no accidents - either in the Arab world or internally in Israel or in her relations with the Diaspora or the community of free nations.

18. I fear that this Despatch ends on a gloomy note, but I can see little hope here of any inclination to flexibility which could give cause for optimism about the possibility of a Middle East settlement. Given Arab disinclination to turn twenty years of hostility into peace as the result of negotiations with the Israelis, and given the strength of Israel's military, economic and physical position and the basic cohesion of the nation behind a tough and intransigent line, the outlook must be one of tension and instability for several years to come. Perhaps this is what the Russians want: their policy in the area has hitherto been one of "tension without explosion" and perhaps all they have changed in is, having learned their lesson about their

/inability





inability to control explosion when it comes to the point, they think by a tighter imperial hold on their clients they can be more successful in their control over the coming years. Worse still, they may consider that, in due course, it may pay them to permit an explosion, which this time ends to their advantage. Either way the prospects for British interests in the area are discouraging. We would seem to be in for the return to a prolonged period when our major interests in the Arab world will be at the mercy of Arab irredentism and hostility towards Israel, in which we shall inevitably be caught up. For the Arabs themselves the outlook is really no less forbidding. They have always claimed that Israel imperialism aimed at frontiers from the Nile to the Euphrates. This, I am sure, was never the Israelis' wish, but recent events and the failure of the Arabs to draw correct conclusions from their débâcle in the latest war has brought the Israelis perilously near accepting that one day they may well have to fight for their survival on fronts very far removed from the Armistice Lines as they existed on the 4th of June, 1967.

19. I am sending copies of this Despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives in Amman, Ankara, Bahrain, Beirut, Bonn, Jedda, Kuwait, Moscow, Nicosia, Paris, Rabat, Tehran, Tripoli, Tunis and Washington; to the United Kingdom Representative at the United Nations in New York; to Her

/Majesty's



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Majesty's Consul-General, Jerusalem; and to the  
British Interests Sections in Algiers, Cairo and  
Khartoum.

I have the honour to be,  
With the highest respect,  
Sir,  
Your obedient Servant,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'R. M. Hadow'.

(R. M. Hadow)

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**ISRAEL**  
**6 July, 1967**  
**Section 2**

**THE SECOND ARAB-ISRAEL WAR, 1967: THE BATTLE**

*Mr. Hadow to Mr. Brown. (Received 6 July)*

**SUMMARY**

1. Who started the war? Almost certainly Israel. Her reasons. (Paragraphs 1-2.)
2. Outbreak of hostilities. The air battle. (Paragraph 3.)
3. Advance into the Gaza Strip and Sinai. (Paragraph 4.)
4. Campaign against Jordan. (Paragraphs 5-7.)
5. The real deception plan and how Israel won time at the United Nations to complete the destruction of Nasser's forces. (Paragraph 8.)
6. The campaign against Syria. (Paragraph 9.)
7. Naval engagements. (Paragraph 10.)
8. Almost unbelievable discrepancy between fighting abilities of Israelis and Arabs. (Paragraph 11.)
9. The end of hostilities. Reactions in Israel. (Paragraph 12.)
10. The Israelis made war. The Arabs thought it was a game according to rules which suited them. (Paragraphs 13-14.)
11. Was this only the first round? (Paragraph 15.)

(No. 19. Confidential)  
Sir,

*Tel Aviv,*  
*29 June, 1967.*

In my despatch No. 18 of to-day's date I have described Israel's reactions to events starting with President Nasser's moves in Sinai and the Straits of Tiran which led to general hostilities between Israel and her Arab neighbours early on the 5th of June. I have the honour in this despatch to trace the course of the war as seen from Tel Aviv, in so far as this is possible on the still incomplete information available. In due course, when the fog of war has dispersed, and the Israel military authorities have revealed much more of the picture than they have so far been willing to show, I hope, with the help of my Service Attachés, to provide a detailed military analysis of the campaign.

2. We shall probably never know (and this is perhaps no longer an important question) which side started the fighting. I believed at the time and it is still my view

that the Israelis got in the first blow, although there may be substance in their claims, which they say have since been confirmed from captured documents, that the Egyptians were on the point of launching a tank attack to cut off Eilat and an air strike against Israel's airfields. I have said in my parallel despatch that I am pretty certain that the decision to attack was taken on the 4th of June and was influenced by political as well as military factors. By then any hopes Israel may have had that action by the United States and Britain could defeat Nasser's blockade of the Straits of Tiran had disappeared. The closure of the Straits was in any case no longer the central problem for the Israelis who saw that the whole military balance in the area was daily swinging against them, threatening no less than the continued survival of their country. This danger was forceably brought home to them by the news of King Hussein's hurried visit to

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Cairo on the 30th of May to sign a joint Defence Pact with Egypt, and by reports of the movement of Iraqi troops and aircraft into Jordan. Either of these developments would, a few months ago, have been in itself a near *casus belli*. Israel, if she were to keep sufficient forces in the south to defeat the powerful Egyptian Army in Sinai, which by then was estimated to be at a strength equivalent to seven divisions with upwards of 1,000 tanks and self-propelled guns, could not deploy more than a thin defensive screen along the Jordan border. A determined armoured thrust by the Jordanian Army, especially if reinforced by Iraqi brigades, could drive through to the sea at Israel's narrowest point in a matter of hours, cutting the country in two. This, coupled with their fear of a pre-emptive UAR air strike against Israel's airfields and cities, must have seemed to the Israel Government an unacceptable risk. There could only be one answer—to strike first before the odds became too great.

3. The first official intimation of the commencement of hostilities was telephoned to my Defence Attaché by the Israel Military Liaison Officer at 8.35 a.m. local time on the 5th of June. The message simply said that fighting had broken out in Southern Israel early that morning between Egyptian air and armoured forces advancing towards Israel, and Israel forces which had "advanced to stop them". I subsequently learned that the opening shots had been fired at about 7 a.m. At 7.45 a.m. the Israel Air Force made its first strikes against Egyptian airfields in Sinai, the Cairo/Canal complex and the Nile Valley. This operation was carried out with surgical precision. Within the first three hours every major airfield in Egypt capable of launching bombing raids against Israel had been put out of use, and the Egyptian Air Force had ceased to exist as an effective instrument of war. No Egyptian aircraft succeeded in penetrating Israel's air space, and no Egyptian bombs fell on Israel territory. Later in the day, airfields in Syria, Iraq and Jordan, from which sporadic attacks had been carried out against civilian targets in the narrow waist of Israel north of Tel Aviv, received the same treatment. There were no Arab air strikes on major IAF airfields, but one transport plane was destroyed by a Jordanian Hunter attack on Kfar Sirkin, and Syrian aircraft three times attacked a

disused airfield at Megiddo which had been disguised for decoy purposes to resemble the main Israel air base at Ramat David. By shortly after noon on the 5th of June the Israel Air Force had undisputed mastery of the air. Their score card by that time showed the destruction of 400 Arab aircraft (including 300 Egyptian) for the loss of only 19 of their own. Strikes by Israel aircraft on Arab airfields were made on subsequent days to keep them out of operation, but the greater part of the IAF could now be used in support of ground operations.

4. On the ground, Israel forces attacked at the eastern end of the Gaza Strip breaking through to the coast at El Arish. Egyptian forces in the Gaza area were cut off and subsequently subdued. The Israelis fanned out from El Arish westwards along the coast and southwards towards Abu Ageila. Meanwhile two other Israel armoured columns broke into Sinai at Ketsiot and Quntileh.

5. Attacks commenced almost simultaneously from across the Jordan border, despite a last minute attempt by the Israel Government through General Odd Bull, the head of the United Nations Truce Supervisory Organisation, to persuade King Hussein to agree to a mutual arrangement of non-belligerency. The Israelis had no plans to attack Jordan, and their dispositions on the Jordan front were purely defensive and manned entirely by reservists. From the middle of the morning of the 5th of June, Jordanian artillery shelled agricultural settlements inside the Israel border, and their long-range guns bombarded the main centres of urban population in the coastal strip causing damage in or near Tel Aviv, Peta Tikva, Nathanya and Lod. In Jerusalem, indiscriminate fire was opened on the New City, and Jordanian troops seized Government House, the headquarters of the United Nations Truce Supervisory Organisation, in an apparent attempt to enfilade into the Israel sector. These Jordanian attacks made little military sense, but they inflicted serious civilian damage and casualties, and could not have been better calculated to enrage the Israelis and force them to do battle.

6. At first only holding operations were possible in the Tulkarm and Kalkilya sectors with the weak Israel forces immediately available on that front. But



one Israel brigade from Northern Command (Syrian Front) launched an attack in the afternoon from the north towards Jenin which was successful by nightfall. Its main job was to capture the high ground from which Jordan artillery could shell the main IAF airfield at Ramat David. At dawn on the 6th of June Israel forces took Latrun and fanned out from Jenin. The air force and ground forces silenced Jordanian artillery positions in the Tulkarm and Kalkilya areas which had kept up a steady bombardment for 24 hours. The thrust through Latrun took the high ground on the way to Jerusalem and Ramallah was occupied by the afternoon. After reinforcements, including tanks and paratroops, had been brought up from the Negev, Jerusalem was surrounded by an Israel pincer movement along the heights, though Jordanian forces still held out in the Old City and continued to shell and mortar the Israel sector and such parts of Jordan Jerusalem as had fallen into Israel's hands.

7. By all accounts, individual soldiers and units of the Jordan Legion fought stubbornly and skilfully, but Jordanian generalship and the administrative handling of their forces was barely one whit more competent than that of the Egyptians. Without air cover, the Jordanian armour, some of which failed to reach the scene of action for lack of fuel, was at the mercy of the Israel Air Force. King Hussein had had his wish and found himself "alone with the Israelis". What he found was not to his taste and he embarked on a series of desperate appeals to the British and American Governments, through their Ambassadors in Amman, for help to bring the fighting to a speedy end. On your instructions, I twice made representations (as did my United States colleague) to the Israel Foreign Ministry for a cease-fire, but by then it was too late. Events were moving too fast. Having been provoked into a fight which they did not want, and had done their best to avoid, the Israelis were in no mood to listen to King Hussein's pleas that they should give him a chance to opt out. In any case, far from scaling down the fighting, the Jordanian troops on the ground were attacking even more strongly than before near Nablus and in the Old City. The Israelis were doubtful whether King Hussein was still in a position to control his own forces, or any longer in touch with the military situation (a point of view which seemed later to be

confirmed by reports from Her Majesty's Ambassador in Amman on the 7th of June that, unless the Israelis ceased their attacks, the Jordanians would counter-attack with everything remaining to them, including "the use of aircraft"). The Israelis suggested that King Hussein should demonstrate his desire to end the fighting by dismissing his Egyptian Commander, but this he was either unable or unwilling to do. Jordanian resistance continued at Nablus and in the Old City of Jerusalem during the early part of the 7th of June, but was subdued later in the day. When the cease-fire took effect Israel forces were in occupation of the whole of the West Bank, and the surviving Jordanian forces had withdrawn eastwards across the Jordan River.

8. Meanwhile, in Sinai, the question was no longer whether the Israelis would win but whether they would be given enough time to complete the destruction of Nasser's armour, which was now streaming back in confusion on all routes westwards to the Suez Canal. On the 7th of June Egyptian tank forces were decimated by ground and air attacks in the areas of Bir Gafgafa and the Mitla Pass, and by the end of the day their escape routes to the Canal had been blocked by Israel forces which had got behind them. On the same day an Israel force landed from the sea, supported by paratroops who were landed on a nearby airfield, occupied Sharm-es-Sheikh without opposition, after its Egyptian garrison had withdrawn to avoid being cut off by the main Israel advance to the north. At the time the Israel military authorities disclosed very little information about these operations, neither to the public nor the Press, nor, despite the strongest urging of my American colleague and myself, to our Service Attachés. There were sufficient local pointers to show that the battle was going Israel's way. The complete absence of activity by the Egyptian Air Force, for example, was in itself an indication of the extraordinary success achieved by Israel strikes against enemy airfields. But, helped by false or greatly inflated Arab propaganda claims, the true extent of Israel's successes was concealed from the outside world, enabling extra time to be bought at the United Nations. It was not until some 36 hours after the Security Council met to consider a cease-fire that the Russians and the Indians, acting on behalf of the Arabs,



realised the danger to their friends and dropped their opposition to a simple cease-fire resolution. Even then the Egyptians continued to delay their acceptance of the cease-fire giving the Israel forces still further time in which to complete the tasks they had set themselves. When firing eventually ceased on the 8th of June, all that was left of the Egyptian forces was the smoking wreckage of their aircraft, armour and other impedimenta, and a pathetic rabble of disorganised troops, who had cast off their boots to hasten their flight, and were now painfully making their way back through the Israel lines to the doubtful sanctuary of the west bank of the Canal.

9. For all their martial bombast the Syrians had a healthy respect for Israel's military capabilities, especially in the air, and were much less eager than King Hussein to sacrifice themselves on the altar of Nasser's ambitions. The war was almost a day old before the Syrian Army entered the lists. Apart from two infantry attacks, supported by tanks, on the 8th of June, which were easily driven off, activity soon confined itself to the traditional Syrian sport of shelling Israel settlements within range of the guns which overlooked the Hula Valley and all the border southwards to the Sea of Galilee. The Syrian bombardment was heavy and sustained. Much damage was caused to Israel kibbutzim, though civilian casualties were fortunately light owing to the use of well-constructed shelters. Here the women, children and infants lived for five days without ever coming up. Continual attacks by the Israel Air Force reduced the shelling but had little effect on the Syrian gun positions which were deeply dug in and expertly camouflaged. They could not be attacked on the ground until sufficient Israel forces could be assembled to make this possible. By the evening of the 8th of June, the Israelis had brought up heavy reinforcements, released by the cessation of hostilities in Jordan and Sinai, and were ready to move in. But, inexplicably as it then seemed, the attack was held off. I have since learned on good authority that, despite strong pressure from the army, Israel Ministers, including General Dayan, did their utmost to avoid an advance into Syria, believing that, as Damascus was the nerve centre of Russian influence in the Middle East, the consequences of prodding in that region could have been disastrous.

I believe too that the Americans, at the request of Mr. Eshkol, passed messages on the 8th of June to the USSR to the effect that Israel had no intention of attacking if the Syrians would agree to an early cease-fire, and later told the Soviets that it was the intention of Israel to attack Damascus. But the Syrians, believing perhaps that the Israel overtures were a sign of weakness, delayed their acceptance of the Security Council's call for a cease-fire, while continuing their damaging bombardment of Israel settlements. The Israel Government could no longer hold out against army and pressure from the northern kibbutzim. On the 9th of June Israel forces attacked simultaneously at a number of points in the north between Banias and Gadot, and in the south near Tel Katzir. After some heavy fighting against determined Syrian opposition, the Israel attacks were successful and the enemy's strong defensive positions astride the Roshpinna-Kuneitra road were enveloped by advances on the north and south. On the southern sector of the front the Syrian's will to fight was broken by continual air attacks and Israel troops were airlifted on to the high ground by helicopter. From then on their advance to the eventual cease-fire line proceeded rapidly at all points. By the 10th of June when a cease-fire took effect they had secured the whole of the Syrian escarpment forward of a line between Banias through Kuneitra and Darbashiya to El Hamma. Despite Syrian claims to the contrary, there is no evidence that they advanced further towards Damascus, though with the collapse of Syrian resistance it would have required little extra effort for them to have taken the capital within a matter of hours.

10. To round off this catalogue of unrelieved Arab defeats, it remains only to mention that the Egyptian Navy made little attempt to exploit its clear superiority over the puny naval forces of Israel. Its intervention in the war was limited to some ineffective shelling of positions in the Gaza area captured by Israel forces—an action which indirectly contributed to the tragic attack made in error by Israel torpedo boats and planes of the Israel Air Force on an American survey ship which foolishly, and without notifying her presence, strayed too close to the Sinai coast. The Israel authorities have put out contradictory statements of attacks by their vessels at Alexandria and Port Said on the night of the 5th-6th of June, and claim to have



damaged Egyptian submarines operating off Haifa. But nothing is known with certainty about these engagements, other than that the Egyptians hold prisoner six Israeli naval "frogmen".

11. The battle areas which my Service Attachés have so far visited show relatively little evidence of hard fighting, and they believe that the Israel military authorities may in some cases have exaggerated the strength of the enemy resistance. If so, this would be in line with the Israelis' policy of concealing the full extent of their successes in order to win time at the United Nations. It does not however detract from the superb performance of their forces which fully measures up to our own earlier military assessments of their morale, fighting ability and technical competence. These were not élite professional troops lavishly equipped with the most modern equipment, but for the most part civilian reservists, with comparatively limited training behind them, who were carried into battle in civilian transport, and were supplied and supported by essentially civilian services. By comparison, the professional Arab armies showed a total lack of appreciation of the essential elements of modern warfare, and an almost equal inability to use the sophisticated weapons and equipment provided by their Russian quartermasters. Their leadership on almost all fronts was inept to a degree which hardly seems possible after 10 years of preparation and training for a war which was to bring about Israel's annihilation.

12. The end of the fighting on the 10th of June left Israel slightly numbed at the magnitude of her victory. There was no general expression of exultation and few outward signs of public jubilation such as marked VE Day in London. Success was accepted calmly, though with a realisation that Israel was now a power in her own right. Demobilised soldiers or those coming home on leave returned as unobtrusively as they had gone, to be welcomed back by their families in private reunions. The immediate mood was one of sadness for the dead. It should be noted that of the killed some 25 per cent were officers and another 15 per cent regular non-commissioned officers, thus illustrating the truth of the story that in the Israel Army the order to "Advance" is replaced by "Follow me". There was some quiet pride in the military valour of Jewish husbands, sons and brothers, coupled with relief that the

civilian population had been spared the suffering and loss which they had expected, and were ready to take, from the Egyptian bombing and naval bombardment of their cities.

13. For those of us who were here throughout the period there was something very inspiring and yet rather terrifying about the orderly and almost imperceptible mobilisation of this citizen army; its rather dispassionate and clinical action in war; and the return of a large portion of it to civilian business-as-usual without fuss or heroics. Another impression is of the ability of the army leaders for brilliant improvisation—even in Sinai much of the advance, often through areas thought impassable, was played off the cuff, and the whole campaign against Jordan was an improvisation from start to finish. If ever the importance of complete command of the air was illustrated this was a case. We should also not forget the tremendous advantage Israel enjoyed from interior lines of communication. Perhaps a remarkable illustration of this can be seen in the experience of one of the drivers of this Embassy who was in the transport section attached to a parachute unit. On Monday morning he was at Nitzana on the edge of Sinai, his truck loaded with barbed wire and camouflage netting. Some time in the afternoon, his unit, whose role was to attack Abu Ageila from the rear, was told that Abu Ageila was falling without their help. They about faced and by dawn on Tuesday morning were taking Latrun. In the afternoon he was in Ramallah and on Wednesday watched the mopping-up operations on the outskirts of the Old City. By Thursday he was in Galilee and spent Friday waiting above the Bridge of the Daughters of Jacob. On Saturday he was half way to Kuneitra. On Monday he was back on leave and "Would you believe it", he said, "I never unloaded my truck all through this time".

14. Against this, with the exception of the Syrians who seem to have shown a certain amount of military realism throughout, the Jordanians and the Egyptians seemed to be living in a military Never-Never Land. There was some element in their thinking that war was only a projection of cross-frontier fighting under the Armistice Agreements. Nasser wanted war but only on terms which made military nonsense. To King Hussein it was some



sort of gallant and romantic game. The Ambassadors who were in disfavour on the 4th of June and whom he had told to leave him alone with the Israelis were being appealed to two days later to get the Israelis to stop the fighting. His most successful *coup* in the war was probably the promulgation of the "Big Lie". At one stroke British and American relations with numerous Arab countries were broken, Consulates and reading rooms were attacked and the flow of oil was stopped. Yet hardly was the war over when he was right back in form, suggesting that his shattered forces should be re-equipped by the West so that he could resist Soviet blandishments. For one side the whole thing was some kind of game controlled (unless they were winning) by rules laid down almost 20 years ago together with some they had thought up since. To the Israelis it was a cold-blooded and unwanted surgical intervention. One can only be put in mind of the story of the Spanish Ambassador, who, after a particularly rough audience with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth I, haltingly proposed that Her Majesty might care for a game of chess. "Sirrah", she replied, "tell your master that the only game I play is the Bloody Game of War".

15. Once upon a time, wars stopped with the surrender of one party or another. Nowadays they stop because of cease fires and armistices imposed from outside. There is no peace treaty; the losers have really lost and the winners have not really gained. Certainly, the problems for the winners seem more difficult than those for the losers. Already we hear that the Russians have supplied Nasser with 200 MiGs; that there is an airlift of arms and technicians to Cairo; that there have been military alerts and blackouts in Egypt and that, for mysterious reasons, Cairo Airport was suddenly sealed off to all traffic for nine hours. The Israelis are watching this situation with some apprehension although it does not get much publicity in the Israel Press. The appreciation must be that the Russians are only making a series of rather spectacular gestures to maintain the present Egyptian régime in power and that these gestures do not betoken any possibility of some quick *coup* by the Egyptians to try and win back some face in the Arab world. I only hope on behalf of the staff of this Embassy that this appreciation is right.

16. I am sending copies of this despatch to the recipients of my despatch No. 18.

I have, &c.

R. M. HADOW.



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(HR 7/16)

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

12 December, 1967.

I read with considerable interest your Despatch No. 42 of 16 November on the political aftermath of the June war. Its arrival was timely as we have been devoting a good deal of thought recently to this subject in an effort to clear our minds about where British interests lie with regard to an Arab/Israel settlement. You may some day see the outcome of this in a despatch.

2. Meanwhile, I should like to touch on two very small points in your own despatch, one to put a question and the other to make a comment. The question is on your paragraph 8, where you mention "The Movement for the Entire Land of Israel". Do the members of this organisation have an agreed view on where the boundaries of this "Entire Land" fall? The comment is on your paragraph 9, where you say with regard to Jerusalem that "they will make no concession on sovereignty". I hope I am not deceiving myself, but my impression is that the Israelis have still stopped short of claiming sovereignty over East Jerusalem. Its status under Israeli administration seems to me virtually identical with that of the Gaza strip when it was under Egyptian administration. Am I right on this?

(T. F. Brenchley)

R. M. Hadow, Esq., CMG,  
TEL AVIV.

Copies to:

P. G. D. Adams, Esq., CMG (Amman)  
J. H. Lewin, Esq., (Jerusalem)

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**ISRAEL**

**20 November, 1967**

**Section 1**

**THE SECOND ARAB/ISRAEL WAR, 1967  
THE AFTERMATH: POLITICAL**

*Mr. Hadow to Mr. Brown. (Received 20 November)*

**SUMMARY**

1. The euphoria in Israel following her victory has been replaced by a sense of frustration, a hardening attitude towards the Arabs and increasing acrimony in Israel's relations with some of her former friends. (Paragraph 1.)

2. Both internally and externally Israel has met with unexpected difficulties. Consequently the sense of "Fortress Israel" has come to the top, as on previous occasions. (Paragraph 2.)

3. Israel achieved her objectives in the war, and more. Her immediate reaction was that, surely, the Arabs had now learned their lesson and would negotiate. Had any Arab leader or leaders then come forward they would probably have received generous terms. (Paragraphs 3-4.)

4. This euphoric period did not last. Israel's mood changed perceptibly in face of what she regarded as encouragement to the Arabs to believe that they had not really lost. (Paragraph 5.)

5. The present Government, brought together under wartime conditions and headed by a weak and indecisive Prime Minister, was singularly unsuited for the prosecution of Israel's interests. In the internal political struggle which has been brought to the forefront by the post-war problems, Mr. Eshkol, Mr. Allon and General Dayan have vied with each other to demonstrate how tough they can be. The decisions about the return of refugees from Jordan and Jewish re-settlement of the Etzion *bloc* result from weakness and disunity in the Government. Yet they have been welcomed by a short-sighted Press and public. (Paragraphs 6-7.)

6. As prospects for a settlement come no nearer, a body of Israeli opinion has emerged in favour of retaining the occupied territories on security, religious or historical grounds. The "Movement for the Entire Land of Israel" is actively and successfully campaigning on a non-party basis for public support. (Paragraph 8.)

7. Israel's terms for a settlement have never been explicitly spelt out, but they will almost certainly be based on the principle that she will only accept arrangements giving advantages at least comparable with those she enjoys at present. (Paragraphs 9-10.)

8. The Israelis' analysis of Arab psychology differs fundamentally from ours. They believe that magnanimity will be interpreted as weakness, but that if they stand firm the Arabs will sooner or later be forced to reach an accommodation with them. They see no good coming out of activities at the United Nations. British efforts in support of a Security Council resolution and our moves to restore diplomatic relations with Egypt are viewed with the gravest misgivings and have aroused hostile criticism. (Paragraphs 11-13.)

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9. The Israelis would probably flout any United Nations resolution they considered unacceptable. (Paragraph 14.)

10. Israel has come to attach more importance to security than to peace. In some ways she would prefer to see King Hussein and President Nasser go. Unless there is a breakthrough in the current situation, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that Israel's frontiers will gel round the present ceasefire lines. Internal pressures (such as Arab sabotage and the problems of integrating 1,000,000 additional Arabs) seem more likely than external ones to force Israel to alter her position. But even so they are not likely to make Israel move in a hurry. (Paragraphs 15-16.)

11. Israel is not unduly worried by prognostications of a further "round" with the Arabs while she stands in a position to march on the neighbouring Arab capitals. This facile attitude rests on several dangerous assumptions and gives little hope of any inclination to flexibility which could give cause for optimism. Russian objectives are not clear, but in any event the prospects over the next few years for British interests in the Middle East are discouraging. (Paragraphs 17-18.)

(No. 42. Confidential) *Tel Aviv,*  
Sir, *16 November, 1967.*

The general sense of euphoria and magnanimity which engulfed Israel on the morrow of victory has gradually given way to a growing sense of frustration as the peace which then seemed within grasp continues to elude her. The intervening months have been characterised by a hardening attitude towards the Arabs and increasing acrimony in Israel's relations with some of her former friends. I have the honour to review the developments which have led to this situation and to describe the prevailing mood in this country as it awaits the outcome of the current deliberations at the United Nations.

2. I noted at the end of my despatch No. 19 that in modern wars "the losers have not really lost and the winners have not really gained. Certainly, the problems for the winners seem more difficult than those for the losers". The second part of this contention has so far proved all too well founded. Both internally and externally Israel has met with unexpected difficulties. The awkward, though valued, relationship with the Soviet Union has been broken. France, staunchest friend and ally, has deserted her. Her relations with Britain have deteriorated, as our inevitable need became apparent to redress our standing with the Arab States where our major interests lie. And, with the diversion of the West's attention to the problems of refugees, the future of Jerusalem, the fate

of King Hussein and the continued closure of the Suez Canal, Israel sees the evaporation of some of the sympathy which supported her before and during the war. She is faced with the economic problems of the occupied territories as described in my despatch No. 36. Although a successful underground movement has failed to materialise on the West Bank, Israel continues to face a military situation of frequent incidents on her present lines both with Jordan and with Egypt. The dangers of escalation, as shown by the *Eilat* affair, are ever present. Critical advice or exhortation from outside has touched a sensitive nerve and, as has inevitably happened in the past, Jewish stubbornness, self-righteousness and the sense of "Fortress Israel", have come to the top. In short the reaction has been predictably one of xenophobic defiance which has further alienated the opinion of some foreign Governments, though possibly not yet of the Western world public at large. On the credit side there has been a noticeable growth of warmth in relations with the Federal German Republic and Rumania which, alone of the Eastern bloc, has shown herself willing to pursue a realistic but friendly policy towards Israel.

3. But if the war gave rise to special problems for Israel and failed to eradicate some of her old ones there were few Israelis who would have agreed in the immediate aftermath that the losers had not lost and the winners had not really gained. Israel went to war to break loose from what

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appeared a grave threat to throttle her. By her overwhelming victory she achieved this objective and more. She felt she had emerged as a power in her own right in the Middle East. She was indebted to no one but herself for her victory. Neither the West nor the East had been involved: King Hussein's wish that the Arabs should be left alone with the Israelis (which the Israelis must have heartily endorsed had they known of it) had been fulfilled. Her enemies were so militarily crippled that it appeared virtually impossible for them to try any further confrontation for a long time to come. Her forces were in occupation of large areas of enemy territory, rendering obsolete the old Armistice Lines of dissension and conflict, and where established on easily defended ceasefire lines. There were, for the first time, many cards in Israel's hands to exchange for a durable peace with the Arabs. Crowning all this, the Old City of Jerusalem was in Israel's hands; the very consummation of Zionism and the fulfilment of the hope which had held the Jewish people together for close on 2,000 years of exile.

4. The immediate reaction after the war was that, surely, this time the Arabs must have learned their lesson and that the real fruits of victory must lie in a lasting and durable settlement. The golden age was about to dawn; the Arabs would see, encouraged by West and East alike, the enormous advantages to them of peace and co-operation with Israel. Hand in hand the two branches of the Semites could march forward to transform the social and economic structure of the whole Middle East. So it was that, for a period, the Israelis showed every sign of being prepared to fall into what they would normally have considered the cardinal error of showing the maximum magnanimity to their conquered foes. I am confident that, if at this stage an Arab leader or Arab leaders collectively had come forward to say that they would like to negotiate a peace they would indeed have received the most generous terms, which apart from the return of territories would have involved the Israelis in large scale plans for economic co-operation, the settlement of the refugees and the general development of the Middle East. The one real casualty was King Hussein whom the Israelis considered to have behaved in a highly treacherous and irresponsible manner, not only towards

Israel, but towards his Western friends. For him it was a case of "Never bright morning again". Nevertheless, even here there was a tendency to co-operate with Western efforts to portray the showing of the Jordan Arab Army as having been far better than that of any of the other Arabs. (This was against the evidence of Israel's own military experts who considered that the only really decent fight was put up by the Egyptians in the area of the angle of the Gaza Strip and Sinai.) But if King Hussein had come forward at that time his tarnished image in Israel's eyes could have been rehabilitated. Only on one point must this paragraph be qualified and that is as from the 7th of June the return of the Old City of Jerusalem either to Jordan or to an international body was quite unthinkable to any Israeli, whose mood was and still is that he would die rather than give it up.

5. This happy period lasted roughly up to and into the meetings of the Special Assembly of the United Nations, which was accepted as a necessary, though slightly dangerous, *entr'acte* which had to be gone through before the real process of direct peace-making could be entered upon. The mood changed perceptibly during the Assembly, when it was felt that its main result was to give the Arabs time to recover from their initial shock, to receive encouragement in the shape of fresh injections of arms, and to avoid facing up to the issue which seemed so clear cut to the Israelis. An early and unpleasant surprise was the attitude of some of Israel's friends and particularly the United Kingdom with regard to Jerusalem. The story once more became current (which I have now seen reproduced regrettably and very recently in the Adelphi paper on the war by the Institute for Strategic Studies) that the withdrawal of British troops from Palestine was accompanied by a secret agreement between Mr. Bevin and King Abdullah which would give to the latter not only the territories allotted to the Arabs by the United Nations Partition Plan, but the whole of Jerusalem in violation of United Nations Resolutions. What else, said the Israelis, could account for this new-found British sensitivity over Israel-occupied Jerusalem, when Britain had acquiesced so quickly in the Jordan occupation and had never raised a protest against Jordanian negation of all Jewish rights in the Holy City? Bitterness was increased by the



discovery of the wholesale desecration of Jewish graves and places of worship in the 20 years in which the Jordanians had been in occupation. Finally, though fortified by the failure of the Yugoslav Resolution and the success of the Latin-American draft (itself a fairly unacceptable document to the Israelis) they found to their dismay that, broadly speaking, the world community seemed tacitly to have accepted the thesis that it was too dangerous and therefore out of the question for any Arab leader or leaders to come forward to discuss peace with the Israelis. In short, a great part of the world was encouraging the Arabs to believe that they had not really lost while the Israelis had not really won. From this point the bubble of post-war euphoria seems to have burst and a harder line became apparent in both governmental and public thinking. Hope for Israel's co-operation in accepting back the "new" refugees began to dwindle as from this moment.

6. Mr. Eshkol's Government of all parties, which was brought together under wartime conditions, was singularly unsuited, in these indeterminate circumstances, for the prosecution of Israel's interests at the diplomatic level or for exercising her new-found responsibilities in the occupied areas. The Cabinet is sharply divided amongst itself and, under the Prime Minister's weak and indecisive leadership, lacks a sense of cohesion. Its members make contradictory statements and pursue conflicting policies. As Minister responsible for the military government of the occupied areas, General Dayan behaves very much as an independent ruler and brooks no interference by his colleagues, although he has now submitted to a certain degree of control over his public statements. The religious parties, from the outset, were the first to adopt "hawkish" attitudes based on the Bible. The circumstances of Israel's post-war problems have helped to bring to the forefront of the political life of the country the bid by the middle strata of Israeli-born political leaders, represented by General Dayan and Mr. Allon, to inherit the reins of Government from the immigrant generation of "old guard" politicians. This is a struggle which cuts across party lines and involves personal rivalries between various contenders for power and their followers. It has directly contributed to the progressively harder line adopted in official pronouncements over the last three months as Mr. Eshkol, Mr. Allon and General

Dayan have each, in turn, sought to demonstrate that he can be a tougher Prime Minister than the others. It is a wry thought, but nevertheless a valid one, that in the unlikely event of the Arabs suddenly agreeing to direct negotiations, the Israeli Cabinet would be caught completely off balance. The wrangling at the conference table would be as nothing to the dissensions within the Israel Government itself, which could well tear it apart. It is far easier for the Cabinet to show unity in intransigence.

7. Israel's highly questionable decisions on the conditions for the return of refugees from Jordan and the re-establishment of Jewish settlements in the Etzion *bloc* (with its implications for a more general return of Jewish settlers to the West Bank of Jordan) are a product of the basic weakness and lack of unity in the Government rather than of a carefully thought out policy for dealing with the areas under Israeli military occupation. They took no account of likely international repercussions nor of the possible Arab reactions. In neither case was the Government subjected initially to strong public pressure, but each short-sighted step as it was taken appears to have aroused considerable enthusiasm among an equally short-sighted Press and public. Whether or not these decisions have reduced the prospect of a negotiated settlement with the Arabs must be a matter of opinion. The Israelis would argue that they have brought this prospect nearer by, in the case of the refugees, adding to King Hussein's internal problems and, as regards Etzion, putting him on notice that he had better hurry up if he wants to regain his lost territories.

8. As time has gone on, bringing a settlement no nearer, a body of opinion has emerged in Israel which favours holding on to the captured (or as they prefer to call them "liberated") territories for their own sake. Those who adhere to this point of view place no faith in any agreements made with the Arabs and believe that the strong right arm of Israel is the only guarantee of her security. They argue that the ceasefire lines are more tenable boundaries, militarily, than the pre-war frontiers; that they give Israel's defences much-needed depth and more than double the warning time in case of future air attacks on her cities; and that they place her forces in a position to deter further Arab aggression by threatening to move



against Damascus, Amman or even Cairo. There are also others who, for religious, historical or nationalistic reasons, would strongly oppose any proposal to retreat from any of the occupied territory. Both these streams of thought have found expression in the recent formation of an organisation calling itself "The Movement for the Entire Land of Israel", which embraces many prominent Israelis from all walks of life, and is actively campaigning on a non-party basis for public support. It is my impression that this movement is beginning to gather increasing support in the country and that it may well have its sympathisers in the Cabinet.

9. But, for the time being, official policy expresses a willingness to enter into direct negotiations with the Arab States, either collectively or individually. The terms on which the Israelis envisage that a settlement might be reached have never been explicitly spelt out, but they would almost certainly be based on the principle that Israel could only accept arrangements which gave her advantages at least comparable with those she now enjoys as a result of her occupation of captured territory. In the case of Jordan, Israel would be likely to insist on certain frontier adjustments to widen the Jerusalem corridor and the narrow waist of the Sharon Plain, the demilitarisation of that part of the West Bank which was returned to Jordan, and the retention of the whole of Jerusalem as part of Israel. On this last point, as I have said, there is no room for compromise in the Israelis' attitude. No Government could survive in Israel which dared contemplate a surrender of the Old City. While they may be prepared to concede some form of extra-territorial status for the Christian and Muslim Holy Places, they will make no concession on sovereignty. Equally, there would be willingness to come to some arrangement with Jordan over the division of the spoils of the tourist traffic, but the generosity of the terms likely to be offered dwindles with each week that passes.

10. Israel's terms for a settlement with Egypt would involve the retention of the Gaza Strip, the demilitarisation of the Sinai Peninsula, and guarantees of freedom of navigation through the Straits of Tiran and the Suez Canal. For Israel, passage through the Canal is important only from a prestige point of view, and she might be prepared not to press this point if an

agreement acceptable to her in all other respects could be reached. The possibility of any settlement with Syria seems for the present to be academic. Israel would expect to remain on the Golan Heights and only to withdraw her forces under arrangements which permanently removed any Syrian threat to the settlements in the Hula Valley and on the eastern shore of Lake Galilee.

11. In assessing the prospects of reaching a settlement with the Arabs, the Israelis' analysis of Arab psychology differs fundamentally from ours. They believe that experience has taught them that any show of magnanimity will be interpreted as weakness and any hint of flexibility as lack of purpose. They believe that if they stand firm on their conquests the Arabs will sooner or later be forced to reach an accommodation with Israel. They can see no good coming out of activities at the United Nations designed to bring about an internationally imposed solution, since they are convinced that these activities only encourage the Arabs to go on deluding themselves that they can recover by diplomatic means what they lost by war without ever having to face up to a real peace with Israel. It would suit Israel best if the present session of the United Nations General Assembly were to end, like the last one, with negative results. She has no wish to have her own hands tied by a Security Council resolution, nor any confidence that such a resolution, however "balanced", would be faithfully observed by the Arabs, or properly policed by the United Nations.

12. Against this background, British efforts to work for a resolution in the Security Council are viewed with the gravest misgivings and have aroused a great deal of hostile criticism in Israel. The impression created in October by reports from New York was that it was the British delegation who were forcing the pace. All the latent Israeli suspicions of British motives in the Middle East have since come to the surface. Our actions are seen as indicative of a change to a more pro-Arab policy designed to serve short-term British interests in the Arab world at the expense of our relations with Israel.

13. The announcement of your intention of seeking a restoration of diplomatic relations with Egypt was immediately criticised as being misguided at a time when President Nasser's stock is all but depleted. Israelis said it would merely increase



Egyptian intransigence and delay, rather than advance, the prospects of re-opening the Suez Canal. The Israel Government, while professing understanding of the problems created for Britain by the continued closure of the Suez Canal, have repeatedly made it clear that they have no intention of falling in with what they regard as Egyptian blackmail tactics, by agreeing to withdraw their forces from the east bank of the Canal in advance of an overall peace settlement. To withdraw even a short distance would be militarily difficult in view of the absence of lateral communications between their positions in Sinai except along the Canal itself, and would involve giving up the commanding advantages they now enjoy of being able to keep Egyptian ground and air forces at a safe distance from their cities.

14. The Israelis are, however, probably not as worried by our activities in New York as the violence of recent local Press reactions might suggest, since they seem confident that they can rely on the Americans to block any resolution in the Security Council which would require them to withdraw their forces from occupied territory without cast-iron guarantees that this would be accompanied or immediately preceded by Arab recognition and a renunciation of belligerency. Even without this safeguard, I have little doubt that Israel would unhesitatingly flout any resolution which she found unacceptable, unless this was backed up by the threat of certain and effective sanctions. She would not be deterred by considerations of world opinion, still less by any regard for the United Nations, an institution which she holds in contempt. (I think it was Mr. Eban who remarked not long ago that if the Arabs were to propose a resolution declaring that the world was flat, they would get 40 votes for it immediately.)

15. The recent Israel Press campaign against us was not simply an ill-tempered outburst engineered by the feeling that we were working against their interests at the United Nations. It reflects basic differences of attitude towards the problems of the Middle East. The Israelis have now, as a result of the last three months, come to attach more importance to security than to peace. They have little sympathy with our policy of bolstering up King Hussein who, when the crunch came, proved to be no less an enemy of Israel than President Nasser. It is of little consequence to them

whether Jordan survives or is swallowed up by Syria or Iraq. Indeed, in some ways they would prefer an openly hostile régime in Amman since its influence would be less effective in Western capitals, they would at least know where they stood. As for Egypt, the Israelis believe that unless he is rescued by the West, President Nasser is on the way out. They prefer to take their chance that his successor will be easier to live with.

16. Unless there is a breakthrough at the United Nations, or Jordan and Egypt open negotiations with Israel in the near future, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that Israel's frontiers will gel round the present ceasefire lines. I am bound to say that I find it difficult, given the current atmosphere in Israel, to see what effective pressure can be brought to bear to make the Israelis budge from these ceasefire lines in default of the kind of guarantees of their security which they demand. Seen from here, the only pressures which may force them to alter their position will be internal ones. In the short term, continued and successful Arab attempts at sabotage and subversion might make Israel wonder whether retaining the West Bank was worthwhile. And in the long term, the more far-sighted are exercised with the question of whether the presence of anything up to 1 million additional Arabs in the occupied territories does not spell the end of the Jewish State. But neither of these pressures is likely to force Israel to act in haste. The security and military forces think that they are capable of rooting out all those Arabs who have connections with terrorist organisations and believe that once this is done the West Bank population will no longer be afraid to co-operate with the Israel authorities. But even if the acts of sabotage continue I suspect that Israel will think very hard before she feels forced to relinquish the West Bank short of a peace treaty with Jordan, since the view generally held here is that, if terrorism is to continue, it is better that Israel should patrol the Jordan and have her civil and military authorities on the West Bank to search for the terrorists. This is considered preferable to returning to the pre-war situation which offered terrorists a salient protruding deep into Israel from which to conduct their activities, and a refuge to which they could return after they had done their business. As regards the Jewish character of Israel if the West Bank and its fast breeding Arab



population are retained, this is a question which need not be faced up to immediately. It would take at least one generation before the threat of being eclipsed by the Arab population materialised, and since Israel at the present moment is concerned with her security in the immediate future she feels she can well afford to wait some time before turning her mind to this problem, which might be resolved in a variety of ways not involving the absorption of the Arabs as Israel citizens with voting rights.

17. In conclusion, the Israelis are not unduly worried by prognostications of a future and possibly "final round" by the Arabs. They appreciate, with what is probably supportable military expert thinking, that a pre-emptive air strike is not merely a question of getting up five minutes earlier than the other fellow. They discard the possibility of the Arabs ever reaching the operational and technological finesse which underlay the Israel Air Force's success at the outset of the Six Day War. They accept that they may well have to suffer far greater civilian casualties and damage, but they are confident that a first-strike by the Arabs could be frustrated even if one were mounted. Israel can therefore afford to sit on her present gains either until the Arabs see sense and negotiate their return, or until a further "round", when an Israel occupation of Amman, Damascus and Cairo could lead to a definitive end of the war and peace negotiations. All this rather facile approach is based on several dangerous assumptions: that the Soviet Union will never intervene actively and that there will continue to be a tacit understanding between the United States and the Soviets that the struggle for influence in the Middle East must be conducted within certain prescribed bounds: that local wars will remain conventional, or that Israel's ability to achieve a nuclear capacity first will serve as a deterrent to Arab nuclear ambitions: and finally (a rash assumption in view of the history of the Middle East over the last 20 years) that there will be no accidents—either in the Arab world or internally in Israel or in her relations with the Diaspora or the community of free nations.

18. I fear that this despatch ends on a gloomy note, but I can see little hope here

of any inclination to flexibility which could give cause for optimism about the possibility of a Middle East settlement. Given Arab disinclination to turn 20 years of hostility into peace as the result of negotiations with the Israelis, and given the strength of Israel's military, economic and physical position and the basic cohesion of the nation behind a tough and intransigent line, the outlook must be one of tension and instability for several years to come. Perhaps this is what the Russians want: their policy in the area has hitherto been one of "tension without explosion" and perhaps all they have changed in is, having learned their lesson about their inability to control explosion when it comes to the point, they think by a tighter imperial hold on their clients they can be more successful in their control over the coming years. Worse still, they may consider that, in due course, it may pay them to permit an explosion, which this time ends to their advantage. Either way the prospects for British interests in the area are discouraging. We would seem to be in for the return to a prolonged period when our major interests in the Arab world will be at the mercy of Arab irredentism and hostility towards Israel, in which we shall inevitably be caught up. For the Arabs themselves the outlook is really no less forbidding. They have always claimed that Israel imperialism aimed at frontiers from the Nile to the Euphrates. This, I am sure, was never the Israelis' wish, but recent events and the failure of the Arabs to draw correct conclusions from their débâcle in the latest war has brought the Israelis perilously near accepting that one day they may well have to fight for their survival on fronts very far removed from the Armistice Lines as they existed on the 4th of June, 1967.

19. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives in Amman, Ankara, Bahrain, Beirut, Bonn, Jedda, Kuwait, Moscow, Nicosia, Paris, Rabat, Tehran, Tripoli, Tunis and Washington; to the United Kingdom Representative at the United Nations in New York; to Her Majesty's Consul-General, Jerusalem; and to the British Interests Sections in Algiers, Cairo and Khartoum.

I have, &c.

R. M. HADOW.



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Reference.....

MR. Moore

Aftermath of the Arab/Israel War

The attached despatch from Mr. Hadow on the political aftermath of the Arab/Israel War in June 1967, is both important and interesting. I have sent a copy for printing and I recommend that the printers should be instructed to give it priority treatment since the subject is likely to be of immediate interest to a number of different departments.

RECEIVED IN  
ARCHIVES No. 15  
12 DEC 1967

2. In general, I agree with Mr. Hadow's analysis of the situation but I have the following comments in detail:

(i) In paragraph 2 I think Mr. Hadow is probably right to suggest that public opinion, at any rate in the western world, has been much less alienated than Governments by the Israel posture of "xenophobic defiance". My impression, reinforced by talking to the representatives of other NATO countries at the recent Middle East Experts Meeting, in general Western public opinion is still solidly on the side of Israel.

(ii) In paragraph 4 Mr. Hadow underlines once again Israeli determination not to contemplate return of the old City of Jerusalem over to Jordan or to an International body. He described the mood of any Israeli as being "that he would die rather than give it Jerusalem up". I am sure this is a factor, damaging though it is to a ~~propose~~ early progress towards a settlement, of which we have to take account in any realistic appraisal of the situation.

(iii) Mr. Hadow's description of the Israeli view of the British attitude towards Jerusalem perhaps requires some comment, particularly the following phrase, "when Britain had acquiesced so quickly in the Jordan occupation of Jerusalem". When Israelis speak in those terms Mr. Hadow might usefully point out to them that the British attitude towards the Jordanian occupation of East Jerusalem was exactly the same as their attitude towards the Israel occupation of West Jerusalem. The reason why the Israelis occupation has caused so much more difficulty over the years has been the Israeli claim to have moved their Capital to the part of Jerusalem which they occupy. Had the Jordanians done the same, no doubt we should have had similar difficulties with Jordan. The Israelis have of course a point when they criticise our acquiescence in the "Jordanian negation of all Jewish rights in the Holy City".

(iv) Mr. Hadow's analysis of the effect of

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the weakness of Mr. Eshkol's coalition Government on Israel's policy in his paragraph 6 is interesting. I conclude from this that only a person with a reputation for decisive leadership and "hawkish" views, such as General Dayan, is likely to have the necessary authority in Israel to persuade Israelis to take the risks which, in my view, they have to take if they are ever to be accepted by the Arabs as a permanent part of the Middle East scene. The problem is that they have to be persuaded to give up undoubtedly strategic advantages for the sake of achieving long term peace. That for the time being Israel opinion is moving rather in the opposite direction is brought out clearly by Mr. Hadow in his paragraph 8. The point also emerged clearly from General Rabin's recent lecture to the Institute of Strategic Studies in which he laid particular emphasis on the advantages of the present cease fire lines and on the need for Israel to maintain her security by means of having sufficient deterrent force in her control. There was little in General Rabin's lecture even to hint at any need on the part of Israel to win Arab confidence.

(v) It is interesting though in paragraph 10 Mr. Hadow envisages that Israel might be prepared not to press for a guarantee of freedom of navigation through the Suez Canal if an agreement acceptable to her in all other respects could be reached. In practical terms however, paragraph 13 makes it clear that this is not likely to have any immediate effect since it does not mean that the Israelis would be at all inclined to withdraw her forces from the East Bank of the Canal in advance of an overall peace settlement. I personally do not believe that there is any prospect whatsoever of securing the opening of the Suez Canal as a result of some kind of partial agreement and that in so far as we continue to hope for this, we are deluding ourselves.

(vi) On paragraph 16 it is perhaps worthy of note that General Rabin in his lecture, seemed quite confident that Israel could contain Arab terrorist activities on the West Bank.

(vii) Mr. Hadow's despatch reaches a rather gloomy conclusion about the future and about possibilities of sufficient Israel flexibility for there to be any hope of a settlement. He also suggests that the Russians will be quite happy to see continued tension and they may in time consider that a further explosion would be to their advantage. Against this view the recent Pravda article on the Middle East situation suggests that the Russians may be genuinely interested in a settlement and that they might be prepared to put pressure on the more extreme Arabs

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- 2 -

to accept it. In any event, I think Mr. Hadow's despatch underlines the fact that it is Israel intransigence which is for the moment the chief obstacle to a settlement and that we need to explore with the Americans whether they cannot influence the Israelis to the point where they would be prepared to take the necessary risks to achieve peace. It seems clear to me that it was the American decision to support our draft Resolution in New York which brought about the marked change in the Israel attitude to it. This suggests to me that they have the influence, if only they would agree to use it, to achieve something more with the Israelis.

(J. C. Moberly)  
29 November, 1967.

I too agree generally with Mr. Hadow's analysis as with Mr. Moberly's comments. On these I would enter a caveat on Western support for Israel, which I think is less definite for Israel's pretensions to sovereignty over East Jerusalem than on other issues. I would expect Western public opinion especially in Roman Catholic countries e.g. Latin America to support an international arrangement.

2. I think the chances of a settlement turn principally on whether the Soviet Union

- (a) attaches greater importance to an over-all détente with the United States in the context of China and her own internal economic problems, than to the opportunities for extending her influence in a Middle East kept in a state of tension but not explosion

and (b) concludes that only a general settlement can avert the dangers of explosion, and that it would be beyond her power effectively to control a continued state of tension based on no settlement.

3. If a settlement is to be reached it will be as a result of heavy pressure on the Arabs and the Israelis by the Soviet Union and United States respectively. The sensitive points at which this pressure will need principally to be directed are



- (a) on the Arabs to negotiate directly with the Israelis, if necessary with the participation of Mr. Jarring. The Arab refusal to negotiate will not be understood by western public opinion, and
- (b) on the Israelis to modify their claims to East Jerusalem and give up that to sovereignty. Unless the Arabs can be given some encouragement to expect Israeli flexibility on Jerusalem I don't think any amount of Soviet pressure would bring them to negotiate.

*recommends priority meeting.*

*A.R. Moore*

(A.R. Moore)

30 November, 1967.

*Sir R. Beament*  
*M. Branchley on return.*

*30/11*

*pa*



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Despatch No. 42

(1073/67)

British Embassy,  
Tel Aviv.

16 November, 1967.

The Second Arab/Israel War, 1967

The Aftermath: Political

S U M M A R Y

1. The euphoria in Israel following her victory has been replaced by a sense of frustration, a hardening attitude towards the Arabs and increasing acrimony in Israel's relations with some of her former friends. (Paragraph 1)
2. Both internally and externally Israel has met with unexpected difficulties. Consequently the sense of "Fortress Israel" has come to the top, as on previous occasions. (Paragraph 2).
3. Israel achieved her objectives in the War, and more. Her immediate reaction was that, surely, the Arabs had now learned their lesson and would negotiate. Had any Arab leader or leaders then come forward they would probably have received generous terms. (Paragraphs 3 and 4).
4. This euphoric period did not last. Israel's mood changed perceptibly in face of what she regarded as encouragement to the Arabs to believe that they had not really lost. (Paragraph 5)
5. The present Government, brought together under wartime conditions and headed by a weak and indecisive Prime Minister, was singularly unsuited for the prosecution of Israel's interests. In the internal political struggle which has been brought to the forefront by the post-war problems, Mr. Eshkol, Mr. Allon and General Dayan have vied with each other to demonstrate how tough they can be. The decisions about the return of refugees from Jordan and Jewish re-settlement of the Etzion bloc result from weakness and disunity in the Government. Yet they have been welcomed by a short-sighted press and public. (Paragraphs 6 and 7).
6. As prospects for a settlement come no nearer, a body of Israeli opinion has emerged in favour of retaining the occupied territories on security, religious or historical grounds. The "Movement for the Entire Land of Israel" is actively and successfully campaigning on a non-party basis for public support. (Paragraph 8)

*Sent for printing  
history. Mr  
Mowbray has  
submitted copy  
to Under-  
Secretary*

*p.a.  
KAY  
25/11*

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7. Israel's terms for a settlement have never been explicitly spelt out, but they will almost certainly be based on the principle that she will only accept arrangements giving advantages at least comparable with those she enjoys at present. (Paragraphs 9 and 10)

8. The Israelis' analysis of Arab psychology differs fundamentally from ours. They believe that magnanimity will be interpreted as weakness, but that if they stand firm the Arabs will sooner or later be forced to reach an accommodation with them. They see no good coming out of activities at the United Nations. British efforts in support of a Security Council resolution and our moves to restore diplomatic relations with Egypt are viewed with the gravest misgivings and have aroused hostile criticism. (Paragraphs 11, 12 and 13)

9. The Israelis would probably flout any United Nations resolution they considered unacceptable. (Paragraph 14).

10. Israel has come to attach more importance to security than to peace. In some ways she would prefer to see King Hussein and President Nasser go. Unless there is a breakthrough in the current situation, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that Israel's frontiers will gel round the present ceasefire lines. Internal pressures (such as Arab sabotage and the problems of integrating one million additional Arabs) seem more likely than external ones to force Israel to alter her position. But even so they are not likely to make Israel move in a hurry. (Paragraphs 15 and 16)

11. Israel is not unduly worried by prognostications of a further "round" with the Arabs while she stands in a position to march on the neighbouring Arab capitals. This facile attitude rests on several dangerous assumptions and gives little hope of any inclination to flexibility which could give cause for optimism. Russian objectives are not clear, but in any event the prospects over the next few years for British interests in the Middle East are discouraging. (Paragraphs 17 and 18).



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- 3 JAN 1968

ER 2/16

(1091/67)

DESPATCH NO. 46

BRITISH EMBASSY,

TEL AVIV.

28 December, 1967.

15

Sir,

The Second Arab-Israel War 1967

Military Appreciation

In my despatch No. 19 of the 29th of June, I undertook in due course to forward a more detailed analysis of the campaign than was possible at that time, so soon after the end of hostilities. I now have the honour to enclose a comprehensive report by my Defence Attaché, Colonel H. Rogers, O.B.E., of the operations conducted by the Israel Defence Forces on all three battle fronts.

2. Perhaps the most interesting of Col. Rogers' conclusions is that the Israel ground forces were nowhere engaged in any really hard-fought action. It still remains to be seen how well they would conduct themselves if opposed by a more determined enemy, or compelled to fight a defensive campaign.

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The Right Honourable George A. Brown, M.P.,

etc., etc., etc.,

Foreign Office.

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3. Copies of Col. Rogers' analysis have been forwarded to the usual recipients of his monthly reports, including the Defence Attaché in Amman and the Military Attaché in Beirut. I am sending copies, with copies of this despatch, to H.M. Ambassadors in Bonn, Cairo, Moscow, Paris and Washington, to the United Kingdom Representative at the United Nations in New York, to H.M. Consul-General in Jerusalem and to the Commander, British Forces Near East; and copies of the covering despatch only to H.M. Ambassadors in Amman and Beirut.

I have the honour to be,  
With the highest respect,  
Sir,  
Your obedient Servant,

*fu* *R.M. Hadow*

(R.M. Hadow)

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DEFENCE & MILITARY ATTACHE'S OFFICE,

BRITISH EMBASSY,

TEL AVIV.

DA/5/2/1/67

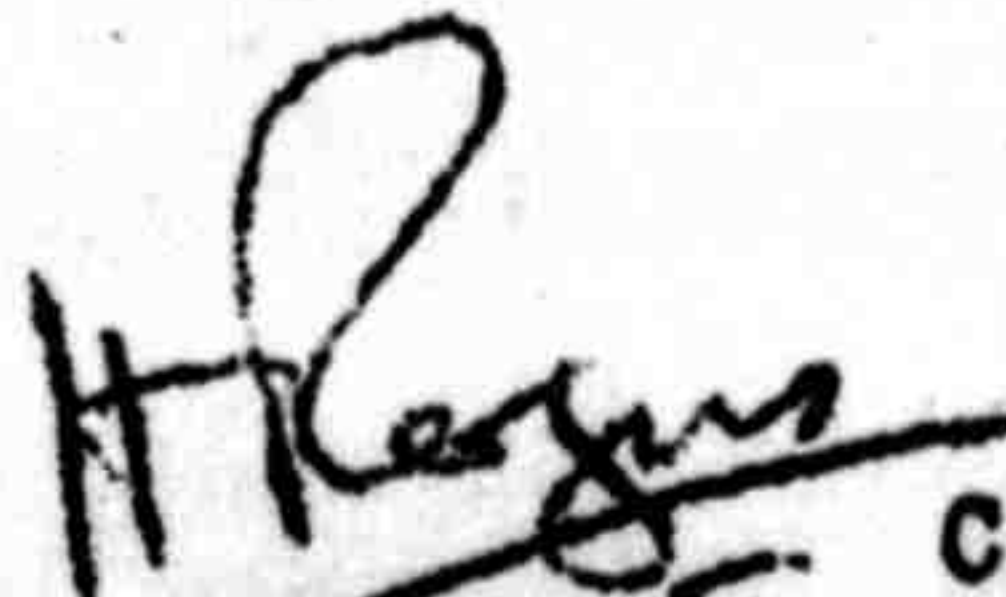
13th December, 1967.

Ministry of Defence,  
Defence Intelligence Staff,  
D.I.4(c).,  
Main Building,  
Whitehall,  
LONDON, S.W.1. (7 copies)

DEFENCE & MILITARY ATTACHE'S DESPATCH NO.1.

"THE SIX DAY WAR" - 5 - 10 JUN, 67.

1. Attached are copies of my Despatch No.1, DA/5/2/1/67 dated 13th December, 1967.
2. This despatch which covers the Six Day War contains:
  - a. An Introduction paras 1 - 3.
  - b. Events leading up to the outbreak of war paras 4 - 24
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  - h. The Period from 11 - 30 June paras 133 - 137.
  - i. Some Comments paras 138 - 143.
  - j. Conclusions paras 144 - 145.
3. I would stress that it is most important to put the performance of the Israeli ground forces in its proper perspective, giving due weight to the conditions under which they operated and the enemies against whom they fought, when drawing lessons from Israeli tactics and procedures during the Six Day War.

  
Colonel,  
Defence & Military Attaché,  
(H. ROGERS)

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DEFENCE AND MILITARY ATTACHE'S OFFICE,

BRITISH EMBASSY,

TEL AVIV.

Despatch No. 1.

DA/5/2/1/67

13th December, 1967.

Your Excellency.

THE SIX DAY WAR 5 - 10 JUNE, 1967

INTRODUCTION

General

1. Throughout the six days of the war attachés were not briefed nor were they allowed to travel in any of the areas in which fighting was taking place. After the war they pressed for information and were at last given a briefing by the ISRAEL D.M.I., General YARIV, on 16 June. Apart from this, some tours of occupied territory later and a sight of captured enemy equipment no official accounts of the fighting nor detailed briefings have been given.

2. The book "The Six Day War" by Messrs Randolph and Winston Churchill probably gives the most authentic and accurate account of those parts of the war which it covers. Mr Winston Churchill was given the entrée to Commanders and their Headquarters which was denied to attachés; even then, from a purely military angle, there are many gaps in the book and much lack of detail and continuity. However, the facts divulged to Mr Churchill produced near hysteria in Israeli intelligence and security circles. So much so, it is reported that an Israeli deputation, including at least one senior officer, visited Mr Churchill at his hotel the night before he left ISRAEL and requested him not to publish the material he had been given! On another occasion General Yariv became very emotional when discussing the book with my Canadian colleague and said that many of the Israeli senior officers should be court martialled for the information they gave away. This has given emphasis to a definite policy of saying nothing at all to attachés.

3. Because the official information has been so limited, I have made no attempt to describe the war in detail. I have confined myself to giving the outline within the time scale of each of the three different land fronts in the hope that, if ever any accurate detail is divulged, then this can be placed in its proper place within the framework of my outline.

EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

April and Early May

4. Looking back it is difficult to be sure exactly when tension began to rise in the MIDDLE EAST but after the Israeli action against SYRIA

/on 7 April .....

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on 7 April, an imperceptible feeling that hostilities on a smaller or bigger scale were inevitable, began to take shape. This feeling was intensified by the incident at MANARA on 6 May, when the kibbutz was mortared from LEBANON by infiltrators from SYRIA, and was followed on 8 May by the mining of the main road to the north from TIBERIAS. Had either of these incidents resulted in Israeli casualties, I believe ISRAEL would have struck at SYRIA again.

5. In fact, if during the period from about 6 May onwards any serious casualties had been inflicted on the Israelis as a result of an incident, then ISRAEL would have retaliated in full.

13 to 22 May

6. On 13 May, Prime Minister Eshkol in his 'Remembrance Day' address to the nation, warned the Arab States that "If they try to sow unrest on our border, unrest will come to them". The Israel Chief of Staff, General Rabin, and various politicians in speeches throughout Israel, also warned the Arabs against provocation across the Israeli borders.

7. On 14 May, General Fawzi went to DAMASCUS for talks with Suedani and on 15 May Egyptian Army units were reported to be moving through CAIRO to SINAI. Al Ahram reported that EGYPT was taking measures to implement her defence treaty with SYRIA. The Arab deployment and build up had begun!

8. Events moved quickly after this. On 17 May the U.A.R. demanded the withdrawal of the U.N.E.F. from the U.A.R. and GAZA Strip. On 18 May the Jordan army was placed on a four hour alert; ISRAEL took defensive measures to counter Egyptian troop moves including the call-up of specialists.

9. On 19 May ISRAEL continued the call-up and Mr. Eban, the Israeli Foreign Minister, sent a message to the Secretary General of the United Nations saying that the following three "elements" were vital to ISRAEL:-

- a. Free passage in the Gulf of Aqaba;
- b. No provocation by Egypt;
- c. No resumption of terrorism.

10. While there was still no apparent sign of a more comprehensive Israeli call-up, it became clear that the freedom of passage for Israeli ships through the Straits of TIRAN was a major Israeli consideration when deciding whether or not to go to war.

11. On 20 May it became apparent that more extensive Israeli mobilization had taken place and that U. Thant's acquiescence to U.A.R. demands had greatly increased the possibility of hostilities breaking out.

12. Nasser's speech in SINAI on 22 May when he stated that the Straits of Tiran would be closed to ISRAELI shipping, was followed on 23 May by the announcement that no "strategic" materials would be allowed through even in non-Israeli ships. It was thought that this would precipitate an ISRAELI attack on Egyptian forces in SINAI.

13. At this time, after consultation with my U.S. and Canadian colleagues, I estimated that ISRAEL had mobilized about half her potential strength (i.e. 130 to 140,000) and this included the bulk of twelve brigades. It was likely that eight of these brigades including 300 to 350 tanks were

/in the South .....

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in the South facing the Egyptians, and four on the Central and Northern fronts. In addition, a large deployment of stores and equipment had taken place and were likely to be ready in concentration areas for further mobilization. (The A.A. later learnt that militarily an attack against Egyptian forces in SINAI was ready for 0400 hrs on 23 May but political approval was not forthcoming).

23 May to 4 June

14. By 23 May it seemed, in Tel Aviv, that the Israeli advantage stemming from a fast mobilization was being lost and this would progressively tell against them the longer the period before war broke out. Added to this was the fact that as over 75% of the Israeli forces are reservists, the length of time a fully mobilized force could be maintained was limited. The assumptions on which J.I.C. estimations had been written no longer seemed valid. (These amounted to little mobilization of Arab and Israeli forces prior to hostilities beginning).

15. During the next few days while world wide diplomatic activity was in full spate, troop movements throughout the Arab countries continued to be directed against ISRAEL and the military problems confronting the Israeli forces were increasing daily. In SINAI the build-up of Egyptian forces and the progressive defensive measures assumed to be under way, was likely to make an attack on this front increasingly difficult.

16. On 23 May D.A. visited an armoured brigade consisting of reservists in the area of SEDE BOKER and was impressed with their morale, efficiency, and obvious anxiety to get to grips with the enemy by offensive action at the very earliest opportunity. The feeling in the army as a whole, as reported by Your Excellency, was one of a confidence in success but with the proviso that the outcome of the air battle would be decisive. ISRAEL was no longer interested in the question of the Straits of TIRAN but unless action was taken quickly and Nasser discredited, Israelis saw in the alteration of the status quo, a slow decline of their country. They were resentful of the indecisive actions of Eshkol and Eban and wanted Dayan, however unpopular, as a leader in the Cabinet.

17. By 1 June, Dayan had been appointed ISRAEL Minister of Defence to the satisfaction not only of the I.D.F. but the whole nation.

18. On 2 June it seemed that ISRAEL was trying to take some of the "heat" out of the situation. The Chief of Staff, General Rabin, had toured army units in the south on 30 May, and in the north on 31 May. He broadcast to the troops on the evening of 31 May saying, "We are capable of checking all aggression and of defeating the enemy armies on their own soil", He also made the following points:-

- a. The danger is still far from past; the army must be patient and show staying power in maintaining its present state of preparedness.
- b. He praised the way mobilization had been implemented and said it had exceeded all expectations.
- c. ISRAEL is in the midst of a campaign involving independent military as well as political-diplomatic measures; Israeli military preparedness underwrites the diplomatic activities and enhances their chances of success.

19. The appointment of Dayan was likely to ensure calculated and deliberate planning and the appointment of General Bar-Lev as Deputy

/Chief of Staff .....



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Chief of Staff had brought in a level-headed professional soldier to assist General Rabin. It was concluded that the I.D.F. were preparing for the long haul while being ready for decisive action against Egyptian forces in SINAI should some unforeseen incident make this inevitable.

20. It was difficult to estimate how long the Israeli nation could retain forces in being especially on the SINAI front, and, at the same time, continue normal civilian life. So far as the I.D.F. were concerned,

- a. the logistic problem was not a critical factor;
- b. communications were well established;
- c. administration and re-supply was a routine matter;
- d. transport was well maintained and there was no evidence of strain;
- e. stockpiling had taken place and reserves could be replenished from outside Israel.

The critical factor appeared to be morale and the strain on the economy of the nation.

21. The I.D.F. had by now realized that the existence of ISRAEL depended upon them and that there was little likelihood of any considerable stand down; they would have to remain at their posts even under the most rigorous desert conditions. They knew they would have to overcome not only the elements but monotony and boredom and, above all, to keep their cutting edge sharp. They had good leaders, were in excellent shape and spirit, and it seemed that morale and fighting efficiency would continue high for a long period.

22. On the economic front, steps were being taken to adjust to the long haul.

23. It was concluded that the Israelis aim would be to try to out down the number of men mobilized to around 100,000 and to work for a longish pause and detente, perhaps for as long as three months. By doing so, they would have hoped to make the Arabs drop their guard and thus regain surprise and, using their ability to re-mobilize quickly, strike a powerful blow while making the Arabs appear to have struck first.

24. It was not so, for on the morning of 5 June, hostilities broke out. The Israelis claim that large numbers of Egyptian aircraft appeared on their radar screens. At the same time a tank attack was launched from the GAZA Strip and they had to react to defend their country. Perhaps the apparent preparation for a long haul was part of a deceptive plan to mislead both their friends and foes while final preparations were being made to launch a pre-emptive attack against Egyptian forces in SINAI. If this is correct, the bluff was completely successful. In TEL AVIV we thought at the time this might be so and, as Your Excellency reported, kicked ourselves for being taken in. However, on more mature thought this is probably not so and the Israelis considered a detente and the lowering of tension improbable. In the end, the D.M.I. (General Yariv) probably convinced the ISRAEL Cabinet on 4 June that to delay longer was suicidal and military action was essential immediately.

THE SIX DAYS OF WAR

General

(Maps referred to throughout this report are 1:250,000 Series K502 and P502. Place names are spelt as on these maps).

25. Despite the size of the Syrian forces deployed in dominating  
/positions along .....

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positions along the North Eastern frontier of ISRAEL overlooking the HULA Valley and the TIBERIAS area, together with other Syrian forces . deployed in their rear, there can be no doubt that the massive Egyptian ground forces deployed in SINAI, supported by very considerable air strength, constituted the major threat to ISRAEL.

26. There can be little doubt, either, that the Israeli General Staff considered any Syrian or Jordanian attack could be met by purely defensive measures using the minimum forces. They appreciated therefore, that whatever old scores had to be paid off against the Syrians, the massive Egyptian forces in SINAI had to be defeated and destroyed as the overriding priority. Only after this was achieved, or was in sight, could SYRIA be attacked and the security of Israeli settlements in the HULA Valley be accomplished.

27. Prior to the signing of the Hussein/Nasser Pact on 30 May, Israeli Intelligence did not expect JORDAN to become seriously involved in any war. They appreciated that JORDAN would only undertake nominal action in order to demonstrate Arab solidarity and that in these circumstances ISRAEL would be able to adopt minimal defensive measures along the JORDANIAN frontier. Even after the signing of the Hussein/Nasser Pact, the Israelis still hoped this would be the case and on 5 June, when fighting broke out on the SINAI Front, the Prime Minister of ISRAEL sent a message through U.N. General ODD BULL to King Hussein, **emphasising** that Israeli forces would take no serious action against JORDAN provided Jordanian action against ISRAEL was limited. The rejection by King Hussein of this Israeli approach necessitated an adjustment of the Israeli plans and resulted in fighting on both the SINAI and CENTRAL Fronts at the same time.

#### The Three Fronts

28. There were three distinct and separate fronts. On the SINAI and CENTRAL Fronts fighting was in progress at the same time. Serious fighting, as opposed to artillery action, took place on the NORTHERN Front only after the battles in SINAI and JORDAN had, for all practical purposes, ceased. For the sake of clarity this despatch will deal with each front separately.

#### Responsibilities

29. The SINAI Front was wholly within the responsibility of the G.O.C. ISRAEL Southern Command, General GAVISH.

30. Responsibility for the CENTRAL Front was divided between all three Commands as follows:-

- a. The Southern Sector of the JORDAN/ISRAEL border from the DEAD SEA west to about BEER TSIQLAG XV7874 was the responsibility of G.O.C. Southern Command. In fact there was no fighting on this sector.
- b. The Central Sector from BEER TSIQLAG north to about BARTA'A XA9795 was the responsibility of G.O.C. Central Command, General NARKISS.
- c. The Northern Sector from BARTA'A eastwards to the River JORDAN was the responsibility of G.O.C. Northern Command.

/31. The NORTHERN Front .....



31. The NORTH RN Front which included the Northern Sector of the Jordanian Frontier and the Syrian and Lebanese Frontiers was the responsibility of G.O.C. ISRAEL Northern Command, General ELAZAR.

Israeli Aims

32. The Israeli's were influenced by the time factor. They did not know how long it would be before the U.N., Russia, and/or the other great powers would force a cease fire. Would they have 24 hours, 48 hours, or how long? They therefore had to make their plans without knowing the time scale within which they would be able to operate, and had to take first things first.

33. Their primary aim was to eliminate the Egyptian threat in SINAI. This required two things:-

- a. the first and most important was to destroy the Egyptian Air Force and the threat it posed, not only from airfields in SINAI, but by long range action from bases as far away as the South of EGYPT;
- b. the second was to destroy the Egyptian forces in being in SINAI.

If there was time, then they would turn their attention to the Syrians; they still hoped there would only be defensive action against JORDAN.

The War in the Air

34. This has been fully covered in the Air Attaché's report AA/TEL/S.13/7 dated 19 July, 1967. The only comment I wish to make here is that its immediate success was a decisive factor in the speed and relative ease with which the Israeli ground forces achieved their objectives. This is a factor to which I refer later.

THE SINAI FRONT

Egyptian Forces

35. Israeli Intelligence estimated that the Egyptian forces in SINAI amounted to 100,000 men with 900 to 1000 tanks including SP guns. This estimate probably gave the Egyptian forces a greater armoured strength than was in fact deployed. However, it included many old tanks which were allocated to the Palestine Liberation Army Forces (equivalent to approximately one Infantry Division) in the GAZA Strip.

36. The Egyptian forces were deployed as follows:-

- a. GAZA Strip - One Infantry Division equivalent with 100 tanks
- b. RAFLAH south to } - 7th Egyptian Infantry Division with  
excluding ABU } 100 tanks  
AWEIGLLA }
- c. ABU AWEIGLLA/ } - 2nd Egyptian Infantry Division with  
EL QUSEIMA area } 100 tanks deployed on the frontier and  
3rd Egyptian Mechanised Division with  
200 tanks in support.
- d. EL KUNTILLA - 6th Egyptian Armoured Division with 200 tanks.

/e. BIR EL GAFAFA .....



- |    |  |   |   |
|----|--|---|---|
| e. | BIR EL GAFGAF/ )<br>BIR EL THAMADA )<br>area | - | In reserve, 4th Egyptian Armoured Division with 200 tanks |
|----|--|---|---|

Israeli Intelligence appreciated that the Egyptian plan was for the Egyptian 7th, 2nd, and 3rd Divisions to advance into ISRAEL along the coast and through BEERSHEVA, while the 6th Egyptian Division advanced East to JORDAN thus isolating the Southern NEGEV and EILAT.

Israeli Forces

37. The Israeli Forces were deployed on 5 June as follows:-

- |    |  |   |  |
|----|--|---|--|
| a. | GAZA Strip   |   | One Infantry Brigade along the GAZA Strip frontier (There may have been another Infantry Brigade in reserve ready to clear the GAZA Strip if and when the advance into SINAI was successful; if this was in fact the case, then there was probably an unspecified Divisional HQ formed to control their operations but this is not clear). |
| b. | ARAB EN NU'EMAT<br>ZV3050 - ARAB EN<br>NEB'AT ZV3060<br>area   | } | - One Armoured Division (General TAL) consisting of two Armoured and one Mechanised Brigades.  |
| c. | MITSPE SHIVTA<br>XV5323<br>GIV'AT HAYIL<br>XV6228 area   | } | - One Armoured Division (General YOFFE) consisting of two Armoured Brigades.   |
| d. | NITSANA XV3747<br>and south along<br>the frontier to<br>opposite EL<br>QUSAIMA XV3194  | } | - One Division (General SHARON) consisting of one Armoured, one Infantry and <del>possibly</del> <i>probably</i> one Mechanised Brigades.  |
| e. | On the frontier<br>opposite EL<br>KUNTILLA XU6219  | } | - One Brigade (probably a Mechanised Brigade)  |
| f. | Two Parachute Brigades were in reserve prepared to assault EL ARISH WV7645 and SHARM EL SHEIKH XR2583. Because of the initial success in SINAI and the developments on the Central Front, one of these Brigades was quickly diverted to reinforce the Central Front. |   |  |

38. The Israeli plan was to defeat any Egyptian attack by taking the offensive and driving into SINAI along three general axes to cut off the Egyptian armies in SINAI and destroy them.

Operations in Sinai

39. ISRAEL G.H.Q. reported that Egyptian forces attacked early on the morning of 5 June and gave orders for their forces to attack the Egyptian forces in SINAI. At 07.45 hrs the ISRAEL Air Force carried out a pre-emptive air strike on the Egyptian Air Force and its airfields including those deep inside EGYPT. Within about three hours the Egyptian

/Air Force .....



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Air Force was made virtually impotent. Subsequently Israeli ground forces operated in SINAI under cover of absolute air superiority. Not only were their operations free from disruption by air attack but they were given massive direct and indirect support by the I.A.F.

Operations by Tal's Armoured Division

40. At 08.15 hrs on 5 June the Israeli Division under General TAL attacked with one Brigade north towards KHAN YUNIS XV2568 and RAFAH XV1864. The aim was to break through between these two towns, wheel south west and, by-passing RAFAH, drive through and beyond EL ARISH as quickly as possible.

41. A second Brigade of the Division attacked west across the frontier with the aim of outflanking the Egyptian defences running south from RAFAH, SHEIK ZUWEID XV0456 and EL GERADI WV8849.

42. The third Brigade of the Division was to follow the second Brigade and capture EL ARISH Airfield WV7838.

43. By midnight 5/6 June, Tal's Division had one Armoured Bn of the Northern Brigade in EL ARISH but the remainder of the Brigade was held up by the EL GERADI defences. Tal ordered two Bns of his reserve Brigade to turn north and attack EL GERADI from the south and called on further reserves from RAFAH, but the Northern Brigade succeeded in overcoming the opposition at EL GERADI before they arrived; the two Bns of the Reserve Brigade were therefore ordered to continue their advance on EL ARISH airfield from which the Egyptian forces were beginning to withdraw towards BIR EL LAFHAN WV8231.

44. By dawn on 6 June, Tal had two Armoured Brigades in the EL ARISH area. He ordered one Armoured Brigade to move south to BIR EL LAFHAN which it reached by 12.00 hrs. Meanwhile one Bn of the Northern Brigade was clearing EL ARISH.

45. At the same time, one Brigade which had been in position near the GAZA Strip, passed through RAFAH and KHAN YUNIS and started to clear the Strip from south to north. By 12.45 hrs on 6 June this Brigade had captured GAZA.

46. By 12.00 hrs on 6 June, Tal had formed a special task force of Tanks, SP Artillery, and Engineers. This force was ordered west along the coast road towards ROMANI VV6933, and the SUEZ Canal.

47. Tal with the remainder of his Division moved south to seize GEBEL LIBNI, WV8000, his next objective, where he was to meet General Yoffe and co-ordinate the subsequent advance of both Armoured Divisions.

Operations by Yoffe's Armoured Division

48. While Tal's Armoured Division was advancing on the northern axis, Yoffe with one Armoured Brigade advanced slowly through the gap which lay between the southern flank of the Egyptian northern defensive lines and the ABU AWEIGLLA XV0713 defensive area. The difficult sand dunes in this gap were considered by the Egyptians to be impassable. By 18.00 hrs on 5 June Yoffe had taken up a blocking position with this Brigade south of BIR EL LAFHAN. By so doing he prevented Egyptian reinforcements moving from either GEBEL LIBNI or ABU AWEIGLLA to reinforce the EL ARISH area, which Tal's Division was attacking.

49. Yoffe's Armoured Brigade in position south of BIR EL LAFHAN, was attacked by an Egyptian Armoured Brigade supported by part of a Mechanised Infantry Brigade. By 10.00 hrs on 6 June it had beaten off this force. Later, on 6 June, this Brigade continued its advance and by

/19.00 hrs was .....

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19.00 hrs was in the area of GEBEL LIBNI.

50. Yoffe's second Armoured Brigade moved forward through ABU AWEIGLLA after this area had been cleared by Sharon's Division (see para 68 below) early on 7 June. By 06.00 hrs on 7 June this Brigade had also reached GEBEL LIBNI.

Subsequent action by Tal's and Yoffe's Divisions

51. At 02.00 hrs on 7 June, Tal and Yoffe met near GEBEL LIBNI. By this time Tal's Tank Force moving along the coast road, was nearing the SUEZ Canal.

52. It was agreed that Tal's Armoured Division would advance from GEBEL LIBNI astride the road to BIR GIFGATA WU1868 and thence to the SUEZ Canal in the ISMAILIYA VU3085 area. Yoffe's Armoured Division would advance astride the road through BIR EL HASANA WU7571 to the MITLA PASS VU9220.

53. The advance began at first light on 7 June with Tal's Division attacking the Egyptians at BIR EL HAMMA WU5288 and Yoffe's Division attacking BIR EL HASANA WU7571. Thereafter, each Division moved as quickly as possible to sieze the passes at BIR GIFGATA and MITLA, and block them.

54. By nightfall on 7 June, Tal's Division, after a further engagement south east of BIR GIFGATA, had blocked the pass, thus cutting off Egyptian forces to the east. An Armoured Regiment at the same time moved west of the pass to prevent the movement of Egyptian reinforcements eastwards from the Canal area. During the night 7/8 June these forces drove off a counter attack by an Egyptian Mechanised Brigade which tried to move north from south of BIR GIFGATA and another force, including T54 tanks, which attacked from the west.

55. By 18.00 hrs on 7 June, Yoffe's Division had reached the MITLA PASS. His leading Armoured Brigade by this time was almost exhausted and by 22.00 hrs had been practically surrounded by Egyptian forces. During the night 7/8 June Yoffe's second Armoured Brigade arrived and by 03.00 hrs on 8 June had taken over from the leading Brigade.

56. By the early hours of 8 June the Egyptian ground forces in northern SINAI were overwhelmed and were incapable of further co-ordinated action.

57. On the coast road, Tal's ~~task force~~ which had reached the SUEZ Canal on 7 June but which had been ordered to retire 20 miles to the east, was ordered to advance again to the Canal.

58. One Brigade of Tal's Division advanced from the area of BIR GIFGATA to the Canal at ISMAILIYA where it joined up with part of the Task Force from the coast road which had continued to move south from EL QANTARA VV3614.

59. During the night 7/8 June, Yoffe's second Brigade had fought its way through the MITLA PASS and by midday on 8 June had reached the SUEZ Canal near the Ferry VU5923 about 6 kilometres north of SUEZ. Another column from this Brigade headed south-west from the MITLA PASS and had reached RAS SUDAR VT7374.

60. At the same time, part of Yoffe's first Brigade (which had been relieved at the MITLA PASS by his second Armoured Brigade) had reformed and, moving through the WADI GIDDI WU0743, reached the SUEZ Canal at the southern end of the LITTLE BITTER LAKE.

/Operations by Sharon's Division .....



Operations by Sharon's Division.

61. While Tal's and Yoffe's Divisions had been carrying out these operations during 5 - 8 June, Sharon's Division had been operating to the south.

62. Sharon's plan of attack on the heavily fortified and defended ABU AWEIGLLA - EL QUSAIMA position was briefly as follows:-

- a. To move his Artillery forward to a position from where it could engage the Egyptian defences accurately;
- b. to block the roads leading into the position from the north - east and east to prevent reinforcements reaching the Egyptians;
- c. to attack the position from the rear with an Armoured force;
- d. to use a helicopter borne Parachute force, landed north of the position, to attack and silence the Egyptian guns;
- e. to assault the position from the northern flank with Infantry supported by Engineers to clear the minefields;
- f. to break into the position with his Armour.

63. At 09.00 hrs on 5 June the Armoured Brigade of Sharon's Division advanced across the frontier and by 12.00 hrs had overrun the Egyptian forward positions. Six Artillery Regiments followed and by 15.00 hrs had taken up Battery positions within 5 miles of the Egyptian main defensive position. Meanwhile, some miles further north, the Infantry Brigade had also moved forward to an assembly area ready to assault the ABU AWEIGLLA defences from the north.

64. A blocking force consisting of one Armoured Regiment, with Engineers and heavy mortars in support, moved east preceded by a reconnaissance group to outflank the Egyptian position to the north and block the roads leading into the position. At 15.00 hrs this force brushed aside an enemy position NNW of ABU AWEIGLLA and reached the EL ARISH - ABU AWEIGLLA road about XV0417 where 20 Egyptian tanks were driven off and the road blocked. After dark this force also blocked the road leading NE from GEBEL LIBNI to ABU AWEIGLLA.

65. Another force consisting of Infantry, Armour, and Mortars, was sent south by Sharon to block the road leading NW from EL QUSAIMA to ABU AWEIGLLA.

66. By these moves the ABU AWEIGLLA area was isolated and as soon as it was dark the Paratroop force was landed by helicopter preparatory to attacking the Egyptian gun lines.

67. At 22.45 hrs the Israeli Artillery opened fire on the position and at 23.15 hrs it ceased and the Infantry assault supported by tanks, began. By 00.30 hrs on 6 June the Egyptian Artillery fire began to slacken as a result of the attack by the Israeli Paratroop force. By 04.00 hrs the Israeli Infantry had cleared three miles of the Egyptian trenches and the Engineers were clearing the minefields; the tanks of the blocking force to the NW were attacking the rear of the position and the main Israeli tank force was breaking into the Egyptian position from the east.

68. By 06.00 hrs the Egyptian defences were shattered and the battle became a clearing up operation. Yoffe's second Armoured Brigade had started to pass through en route to GEBEL LIBNI (see paragraph 50 above).

/69. By nightfall on .....



69. By nightfall on 7 June, Sharon's Division had succeeded in liquidating the entire Egyptian 2nd Division in the ABU AWEIGLLA - EL QUSAIMA area, and had advanced south west to the WADI EL ARISH WU9035 on the road to QAL'ET EL NAKHL WU7209. The advance had been slow because of the terrain and the need to clear Egyptian minefields.

70. During the period from 5 - 7 June, the Israeli Brigade which had been on the frontier opposite EL KUNTILLA XU6219, probed forward and on 8 June as the Egyptian 6th Armoured Division began a hasty withdrawal, followed up as quickly as terrain and obstacles would permit.

71. On 8 June, Sharon's Division continued its advance on QAL'ET EL NAKHL and encountered and destroyed an Egyptian Armoured Brigade which was retreating before the Israeli Brigade advancing from EL KUNTILLA through EL THAMAD XT2683.

72. On 7 June SHARM EL SHEIKH XR2583 was siezed by a seaborne and airborne force after the Egyptian garrison had evacuated the area.

73. By nightfall on 7 June the Egyptian Army in SINAI had ceased to exist as a fighting force and it only remained to round up pockets of resistance and the shattered remnants of the Egyptian forces; a task of some magnitude in an area the size of SINAI.

#### Casualties in SINAI

74. Of the Israeli ground forces in SINAI, 387 were killed (including 112 in the GAZA Strip) and 800 wounded. 61 Israeli tanks were hit or damaged on minefields.

#### Comments on the fighting in SINAI

75. It appears that the Israeli forces were able to carry out their plans for the offensive into SINAI and the capture of the peninsula without having to modify or alter these plans because of unforeseen developments. The reasons for this are:-

- a. Massive direct and indirect air support after the first few hours on 5 June;
- b. the speed and drive with which they carried through their operations;
- c. superior leadership at all levels coupled with the technical and professional ability of their troops which far surpassed that of the Egyptians;
- d. the ineptness of the Egyptian forces and their utter inability to handle the excellent equipment with which they were armed.

76. Although the I.D.F. have said, and maintain, that there was very heavy fighting on this front, available evidence does not entirely support this. For instance, the fighting in and around RAFAH, KHAN YUNIS and EL ARISH was stated to have been extremely hard and bitter. Examination of the battlefields, casualties to equipment and vehicles and the speed with which success was achieved, do not support this statement. Heavy armoured battles which were stated to have taken place at such places as BIR EL LAFHAN and JEBEL LIBNI, appear in retrospect to have been little more than armoured skirmishes. Admittedly, during the Egyptian counter attack at BIR GIFGAPA where Israeli AMX tanks were engaged by Egyptian T54 tanks, the Israeli's suffered heavy tank casualties. Even the assault on the heavily defended ABU AWEIGLLA - EL QUSEIMA area was quickly successful and the Egyptians do

/not appear to .....



not appear to have fought with either determination or skill.

77. I conclude that the Israeli ground forces suffered a great proportion of their casualties on defensive minefields and during the initial attacks on defended positions and localities. It may be that in order to achieve speed some of their attacks were more costly than they might have been. Again, tiredness through lack of rest, may have been a factor which caused unnecessary casualties at BIR GIEGAF and the MITLA PASS. Certainly the speed with which the numerically inferior Israeli force disposed of the numerically superior Egyptian force does not indicate that much serious and determined opposition was encountered. In coming to this conclusion it should be stressed once again that the Egyptian forces had no air support while the Israeli forces had continuous air support.

THE CENTRAL (JORDAN) FRONT

General

78. As has been stated in paragraph 27 above, the Israelis hoped that JORDAN would not take serious action on the Central Front and communicated to the Jordanian government, through General ODD BULL, their intention not to attack JORDAN unless action by the latter forced them to do so. King HUSSEIN rejected this communication.

79. In the event, JORDAN attacked in the air and on the ground. This included the shelling, among other places, of JERUSALEM and TEL AVIV and air attacks on settlements near NETHANIYA. A serious threat to the Israeli airfields at RAMAT DAVID and LOD by Egyptian Commandos together with attacks by Jordanian forces in the JERUSALEM area, also developed early on 5 June.

80. Sometime about midday, the exact time is not clear, G.O.C. Central Command was authorized by G.H.Q. to counter-attack; later on forces in Central Command were strengthened by the addition of one Parachute Brigade placed under Command.

Jordanian Forces

81. Israeli Intelligence estimated that there were six Jordanian Infantry Brigades with supporting arms deployed on the West Bank on JORDAN. In addition, 60 Jordanian Armoured Brigade was known to be in the area of SALT.

82. The detailed deployment of the Jordanian forces as given by D.A. Amman in his despatch MA/A111 of 22 June, 1967, paras 3 to 6, was not divulged to attachés if, in fact, Israeli Intelligence was aware of all details. However, mention was made of movements of Iraqi troops westwards and the presence of Egyptian Commandos on the West Bank,

Israeli Forces

83. In the Northern Sector of the Central Front (the responsibility of G.O.C. Northern Command) the frontier was initially protected by light reconnaissance and defensive forces. However, during 5 June, G.O.C. Northern Command moved a Divisional HQ, probably with one Armoured and one Mechanized Brigade, under command, from his forces in the north to the JENIN YA1794 area.

84. In the Central Sector the forces deployed under G.O.C. Central Command were

- a. One Reserve Infantry Brigade along the frontier from approximately TULKARM XA9177 to inclusive the LATRUN Salient YA8020.
- b. One Infantry Brigade (JERUSALEM Brigade) in the JERUSALEM area.

/c. One Armoured .....



- c. One Armoured Brigade (HAREL Armoured Brigade) in the area of RAMLA XA7834, for counter attack within Central Command.
- d. During 5 June the following forces were put under command G.O.C. Central Command.
  - (i) One Parachute Brigade. Initially at 12.00 hrs, only one Battalion was placed under command but later, about 17.00 hrs, the whole Brigade.
  - (ii) A Mechanised Parachute Force was put under command of the Armoured Brigade (c. above). Its strength was probably one battalion plus but possibly amounted to two battalions.

85. In the Southern Sector (the responsibility of G.O.C. Southern Command) light defensive forces protected the frontier.

Operations in the Central Command Sector

86. About 08.30 hrs on 5 June the Jordanians began shelling in the JERUSALEM area; starting sporadically this gradually increased in intensity. By 11.30 hrs shelling had spread along the entire front and several kibbutzim were among the targets hit. TEL AVIV became the target for Jordanian 155 mm guns firing from QALQILIYA YA8564; settlements and roads were bombed from the air.

87. By 14.00 hrs Jordanian forces had occupied Old Government House - the U.N. Headquarters in JERUSALEM, south of Mount Zion; about the same time G.O.C. Central Command was authorized by ISRAEL G.H.Q. to counter-attack. By this time a Parachute Battalion had been put under command G.O.C. Central Command (later the whole Brigade and an additional Mechanised Parachute Force were also put under his Command (see paragraph 84 above). The HAREL Armoured Brigade was ordered to move to the JERUSALEM area. The JERUSALEM Infantry Brigade was ordered to recapture Old Government House which was taken by 15.50 hrs; subsequently the Brigade was to move south, capture SUR BAHR YA1314 and continue to advance towards BETHLEHEM YA0810.

88. The HAREL Armoured Brigade was ordered to attack north from the JERUSALEM corridor along three axes, the central axis of which ran due north from the CASTEL YA0420. The aim was to reach and cut the JERUSALEM - RAMALLAH YA0922 road north of JERUSALEM and subsequently to be prepared to operate north or south. This attack started at 17.30 hrs.

89. The Parachute Brigade was deployed against JERUSALEM itself and its objectives included the approaches to the Old City, the SHEIKH JARRAH YA1119 area and Mount SCOPUS YA1521. This attack was launched at 02.30 hrs on 6 June.

90. By dawn on 6 June the position was as follows:-

- a. The HAREL Armoured Brigade had cleared the high ground north of the JERUSALEM corridor and had reached the JERUSALEM - RAMALLAH road in the area of the cross roads YA1126.
- b. The Parachute Brigade had taken SHEIKH JARRAH and established contact with the Israeli Police Force in the Mount SCOPUS enclave. They had also advanced to the Walls of the Old City and towards the Mount of OLIVES east of the Old City.
- c. The JERUSALEM Infantry Brigade had captured SUR BAHR and was preparing to move south.

/To prevent the .....



To prevent the Jordanian 60th Armoured Brigade, still in the area north of the DEAD SEA, moving west to reinforce the Jordanian forces in the JERUSALEM area, or south to the HEBRON XV9990 area, this formation was kept under almost continuous attack by the I.A.F.

91. On 6 June ISRAEL G.H.Q. decided that the capture of all JERUSALEM should be completed with the greatest possible speed; the Parachute Brigade was given additional artillery and air support and by 10.30 hrs it had captured the Old City and was on the high ground to the east. EIZARIYA YA1517, and ABU DIS YA1516 had been captured and the advance was continuing. In the Old City itself, sniping was still going on and clearing operations took some time to complete. The Armoured Brigade continued to clear the area north of JERUSALEM and by 18.00 hrs had captured RAMALLAH.

92. Elsewhere in the Central Sector on 6 June, subsidiary attacks were made as follows:-

- a. by the Mechanized Parachute Force to clear the LATRUN salient and then advance to RAMALLAH where it joined the HAREL Armoured Brigade;
- b. by the reserve Infantry Brigade further north which pushed forward two columns through QALQILIYA and TULKARM-the latter directed on NABLUS YA1367.

By the morning of 7 June the Jordanian Army on the West Bank was in disarray and was retreating throughout the area.

93. The HAREL Armoured Brigade sent one column north towards NABLUS and by evening it had joined up with the force advancing from the Northern Sector south of NABLUS (see para 99 below). Another column of this Brigade moved east and south to capture JERICHO and advanced to the River JORDAN

94. The JERUSALEM Infantry Brigade moving rapidly south captured BETHLEHEM, KAFAR ETSYON YA0304, and by evening was in HEBRON YV0090. The column advancing from TULKARM was approaching NABLUS and the column which had advanced through QALQILIYA had turned north and was clearing the border area.

#### Operations in the Northern Command Sector

95. On 5 June Jordanian troops opened fire on kibbutzim in the area south and west of BEIT SHEAN YA3698, and in the Mount GILBOA YB2500 area. At 12.00 hrs G.O.C. Northern Command was ordered to attack the JORDAN forces and positions within his sector of the Central Front.

96. To carry out the attack G.O.C. Northern Command moved a Divisional HQ with one Armoured and one Mechanised Brigade under command from their concentration areas further north. At 17.00 hrs the Mechanised Brigade began its attack on JENIN advancing astride the MEGIDDO YB0507 - JENIN road. Another column from the same Brigade advanced from the area of EIN ES SAHLA YA0297, towards KUFERAT YA0593. The aim was to outflank JENIN and to attack the town from the south. By early morning of 6 June JENIN was captured and the Brigade was ordered to continue its advance towards NABLUS.

97. On 6 June the Armoured Brigade was ordered to advance east of JENIN through DEIR ABU DA'IF YA2395, QABATIYA YA1588, and TUBAS YA2379, to sieze NABLUS from the north east.

/98. By the evening .....



CONFIDENTIAL

- 15 -

98. By the evening of 6 June these forces had reached the general line of the road junctions YA0988 and YA1886.

99. On 7 June these forces reached NABLUS and had linked up south of the town with the HAREL Armoured Brigade moving north from RAMMALLAH and west of NABLUS with the column advancing from TULKARM. In addition, the Armoured Brigade advancing on the TUBAS axis had detached a force which moved south east to the River JORDAN at the DAMIYA Bridge. A small mobile Infantry Force had also crossed the frontier south of TIRAT TSEVI YA3790 and advanced south along the JORDAN Valley road.

100. By 20.00 hrs on 7 June a cease fire had been agreed on the Central (JORDAN) Front and Israeli forces had closed up to the West Bank of the River JORDAN. Thereafter, on 8 June, some mopping up operations were undertaken and the JERUSALEM Infantry Brigade completed its advance from HEBRON to link up with ISRAEL territory in the south.

Casualties on the Central Front

101. Of the Israeli ground forces on the Central Front, 177 were killed (including 107 on the Northern Sector) and 1,451 wounded (including 322 on the Northern Sector).

Comments on the fighting on the Central Front

102. Relatively, the Jordanian forces on the Central Front appear to have given a better account of themselves than the Egyptian and Syrian forces on the other two fronts. This, in part, accounts for the high figure of Israeli casualties; added to this the difficult fighting in the built-up area in and around JERUSALEM must have taken its toll.

103. The fighting was heaviest in and around JERUSALEM and in the JENIN area. On the whole, however, it is difficult to credit the fighting with the description of "heavy". It must be remembered that the Israeli forces had to be redeployed and re-inforced on 5 June and this took some time. In actual fighting time, the battle for JERUSALEM took less than 14 hours and the Parachute Brigade's attack to clear the City took three and a half hours, though there was still some "mopping up" to be done afterwards.

104. In the JENIN area the Israelis attacked piecemeal as forces arrived from further north and this undoubtedly prevented the full weight of their attack being developed until 6 June.

105. The Israelis had complete air superiority and this enabled them to deploy their supporting arms unimpeded to give the maximum support as and when it was required. It also prevented the Jordanians from reinforcing troops already in position. In short, the Jordanians were overwhelmed by the speed and weight of the Israeli assault. Once JERUSALEM and JENIN had fallen there was little fighting other than some skirmishes against isolated defensive positions and ill organized rearguards.

THE NORTHERN (SYRIAN) FRONT

General

106. During the period from the outbreak of war on 5 June until 9 June, Israeli action on the Northern Front was entirely defensive.

/However, the .....

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However, the kibbutzim and settlements were under almost continuous Syrian artillery fire and on 6 June three small Syrian attacks were made with infantry supported by tanks against DAN YB4782 and SHEAR YASHUV YB4680. These attacks were not pressed with any great determination and were easily driven off. If they were intended to put the Israeli defensive measures off balance, or to draw reserve forces to the north, they were entirely unsuccessful.

107. It was surprising that no attack was made on this front by Israeli forces before the early hours on 9 June. Because of the dominating Syrian positions on the GOLAN HEIGHTS overlooking the Israeli kibbutzim and settlements in the HULA Valley and the LAKE TIBERIAS areas; because the Syrians had continually harassed these areas with artillery, mortar and small arms fire, for a long period before the war, and because of continuous Syrian backed Fatah infiltration across the border, an early attack on Syria by Israeli forces was anticipated. It was considered probable that an Israeli attack would be ordered as soon as operations in SINAI and against JORDAN would permit. By 7 June it seemed that this moment had been reached.

108. It seems likely, however, that the attack on Syria was delayed further to allow the reinforcement from other fronts time to carry out some measure of re-equipment, resupply, and to rest. This delay also had the advantage of giving the Israeli Air Force time to attack and soften up the Syrian defences before the ground forces advanced.

109. It was only later that I learnt the Israeli Cabinet had been unwilling to risk an attack on Syria as it considered this might have resulted in Soviet intervention, especially if DAMASCUS the centre of Soviet influence in the Middle East, was threatened. It was not until pressure was put on the Cabinet by G.O.C. Northern Command, backed by strong public feeling, that the attack on Syria was finally authorized early on 9 June.

#### Syrian Forces

110. I.D.F. Intelligence estimated that the Syrian Heights were held by three Infantry Brigades-the 11th, 8th, and 19th, each supported by a tank Battalion, in the forward positions. Two further Infantry Brigades-the 90th and 32nd, also supported by a tank Battalion were each deployed to give depth to the defences. The 90th Brigade north of the road QNALITRA YB6468 - ROSHPINNA YB3752, and the 32nd south of this road. During the period 5 to 6 June Israeli deceptive movements in the KAROZIN YB5044 area resulted in the movement of the 80th Syrian Infantry Brigade into the general area QRLANE YB4947 - QOUSBIYE YB5452.

111. A striking force of two Armoured and two Mechanised Brigades was positioned astride the QNALITRA - ROSHPINNA road from the Customs House YB4756, north eastwards. Later this force was strengthened by the addition of another Armoured and another Mechanised Brigade which remained in the QNALITRA area.

#### Israeli Forces

112. It is difficult to determine exactly the Israeli forces deployed under G.O.C. Northern Command on 5 June because accounts of the actions on this Front only refer in any detail to 9 and 10 June, and these accounts are at best "sketchy". It is also reasonably certain that after 8 June some Israeli formations/units were redeployed from either the Central or Sinai Fronts, perhaps from both. These probably included at least one Infantry Brigade, two Armoured Battalions, and a Parachute Force.

/On 5 June the .....



On 5 June the forces deployed probably consisted of:-

One Divisional HQ - General ELAD PELED.

Two Armoured Brigades

Two Mechanised Brigades

Three Infantry Brigades or their equivalents.

113. The Divisional HQ was to control the Sector south and east of LAKE TIBERIAS. During the period 5 - 7 June this HQ with the one Armoured and one Mechanised Brigades under command, operated on the Northern Sector of the Central Front (see para 96 above).

114. There were considerable Engineer resources available whose main task was to breach the Syrian minefields and fixed defences.

Operations on the Northern Front

115. Because the strength of the Syrian defences which, together with the topography of the area, made any frontal assault a hazardous and probably a lengthy operation, G.O.C. Northern Command planned to make his main attacks on the northern and southern flanks. Neither was an easy task but the Syrian defences were not in such strength, nor so deep, as in the centre.

116. During the period from 5 June onwards, in order to deceive the enemy as to his intention and thus prevent Syrian reserves being deployed to strengthen the flanks, G.O.C. Northern Command ordered movement to take place in the KAROZIN YB4044 area. By this means he hoped the Syrians would anticipate an Israeli attack on QNAITRA astride the road leading north east from ROSH-INNA.

117. Before and throughout the whole action practically the entire strength of the Israeli Air Force was deployed against Syria in support of the Israeli ground forces.

118. At 11.30 hrs on 9 June the Israeli attack began. An Armoured Brigade attacked from the area of KEFAR SZOLD YB4876. This Brigade had considerable Engineer support to clear lanes through the enemy minefields and assist vehicles over the difficult ground. Once through the minefields the Brigade advanced on ZAORA YB5379 and EL RHEILA YB5374.

119. About two kilometres further north, the GOLANI Infantry Brigade with armoured support attacked TEL AZAZIYAT YB5080 and TEL FAQ'R YB5280, and then continued north to capture BANIAS YB5283.

120. South of the Armoured attack, another Infantry Brigade with Armoured support attacked in the area from GONEN YB4768 south to ASHETURA YB4661. A number of breaches were made in the Syrian defences in this area and some armour was passed through to reinforce the attack in the GONEN area.

121. By last light on 9 June two breaches had been made in the Syrian defences and the night 9/10 June was spent in regrouping, enlarging the breaches, and improving the routes already forced through the Syrian minefields.

122. On 10 June in the north

- a. an Infantry Brigade with armoured support attacked and quickly captured MASSADE YB6881 and cleared the area to the east and north of village. A small part of this

/Brigade attacked.....



Brigade attacked from the direction of DAN north east through CHEBAA YB4984 and cleared the area of the Syrian/Lebanese frontier and the south western slopes of Mt HERMON;

- b. the Armoured Brigade turned south east and advanced rapidly towards QNAITRA which was reached at 14.30 hrs. The GOLANI Infantry Brigade followed to clear the town. Afterwards an Armoured column moved south on BOUTMIYE YB6949;
- c. the Armour of the Brigade which had attacked in the GONEN area and to the south, advanced through RAOUIYE YB5168 - DALOUE YB5865, and south of TELL ABOU NIDA YB6066 to QNAITRA. The Infantry Battalions of this Brigade cleared the area to the south and in the direction of BOUTMIYE.

123. Meanwhile, on 10 June in the south, the forces under command of PELED'S Divisional HQ carried out operations as follows:

- a. An Infantry Brigade attacked the Syrian positions on the high ground to the east of LAKE TIBERIAS and captured TAWFIQ YB4823 and the positions to the north along the escarpment overlooking the Lake. At the north east end of the Lake it linked up with a small force advancing south-east from KAROZIN.
- b. An Armoured Brigade forced its way through the YARMUK Gorge towards EL HAMMA YB5020; then north east to DAABOUSSIYE YB5527 and HEITE YB6033, eventually reaching BOUTMIYE where it linked up with the forces advancing from the north.
- c. A helicopter-borne Parachute Force was landed on the plateau south of FIQ YB5329 to prevent the movement of Syrian reserves and to support the Armoured and Infantry attacks. This force advanced astride the road through FIQ and KHISFINE YB6438 to BOUTMIYE.

By the time the cease fire became operative at 18.00 hrs on 10 June, the GOLAN Heights were cleared and the whole area from the slopes of Mt HERMON in the north, along a line running east of QNAITRA and BOUTMIYE, and from there south-west to EL HAMMA, was in Israeli hands.

#### Casualties on the Northern Front

124. Of the Israeli ground forces operating on the Northern Front 115 were killed and 306 wounded.

#### Comments on the fighting on the Northern Front

125. The Israeli attack on the Northern Front was successful and was completed in just over thirty hours with less casualties than on the SINAI or Central Fronts. This, despite the fact that the Syrian defences were stronger than those of either the Egyptians or Jordanians. Furthermore, the terrain was the most difficult and there was a greater concentration of Syrian forces relative to the length of the Syrian frontier. However, the full weight of the Israeli Air Force was available to support the ground attacks on 9 and 10 June and previously had carried out massive attacks on the fixed defences.

126. I believe that the only problems which faced the Israeli forces were:

/a. to force the .....



- a. to force the minefields in the north;
- b. to break through the initial defensive crust.

That these two problems were overcome so quickly was due to the overwhelming air support and the utter inability of the Syrians to put up any really effective resistance. Once a break-in had been achieved in the KEFAR SZOLD area and to the north, all Syrian co-ordinated resistance crumbled. It is even said that in some instances Syrian guns continued to shell the HULA Valley area and did not switch their fire to engage the Israeli attacking forces! The majority of Israeli casualties were suffered breaching the minefields and during the initial attack in the north.

127. I conclude that on the Northern Front the fighting was initially moderately severe but thereafter the operation was one of clearing the area of small pockets of resistance. The Syrian Army proved to be the least effective and most incompetent force met during the six days of war.

### THE WAR AT SEA

#### General

128. Very little information and practically no detail has been divulged of the naval actions that took place. Perhaps there is little to tell. General Yariv, the ISRAEL D.M.I., stated on 16 June ".....the Egyptian Navy did not fight" and "..... the Israel Navy had had no serious fighting".

#### The Naval actions

129. The naval actions that have been reported are:-

- a. On the night 5/6 June an Israeli Naval force entered RAS EL TIN (ALEXANDRIA) and inflicted damage on Egyptian warships. One Comar or Ossa missile craft was sunk. This attack was supported by Israeli frogmen;
- b. on the same night an Israeli force of destroyers and MTB'S raided PORT SAID and attacked two Egyptian missile carrying vessels which were leaving harbour and heading north; the Egyptians were forced to turn back after sustaining damage. The Commander of the Israeli force was criticised later by Aluf Erell, the Commodore of the ISRAEL Navy, for attacking too soon and thus forfeiting the opportunity of destroying the Egyptian vessels;
- c. on 7 June an Egyptian submarine was attacked with depth charges off RASH HANIQRA (RAS NAQUARA) on the ISRAEL/LEBANON border. The submarine was presumed damaged as patches of oil were seen to come to the surface;
- d. on 8 June another submarine which was submerged in HAIFA Bay was detected and attacked with depth charges. This was also presumed damaged as oil was soon to come to the surface. On the same day a third submarine was attacked and withdrew.

130. A Naval force took part in the capture of SHARM EL SHEIKH. A force which landed unopposed over the beaches, was transported from EILAT through the GULF OF AQABA.

/131. During the attack .....



131. During the attack on RAS EL TIN on the night of 5/6 June, six Israeli frogmen were captured by the Egyptians and are still in captivity.

132. Perhaps one of the most important roles played by the Israeli Navy was prior to the outbreak of war, when a deception plan carried out over their communications network was thought to have been responsible for the transfer of a significant proportion of the Egyptian Naval strength from the MEDITERRANEAN to the RED SEA. While it is easy to denigrate the part played by the Israeli Navy, the fact is that their presence and, to the Egyptians, their presumed efficiency, effectively deterred the Egyptian Navy from taking any offensive action. It is interesting to speculate what the effect on Israeli morale would have been had Egyptian Naval forces made use of their capability of carrying out serious missile attacks on TEL AVIV, HAIFA, or other important centres of population and communication on the seaboard flank of ISRAEL. Credit must, therefore, be given to the Israeli Navy for proving itself an effective deterrent force.

THE PERIOD FROM 11 - 30 JUNE

General

133. During the immediate post war weeks the ISRAEL Defence Forces were fully occupied with problems in the recently occupied territories, demobilization, collection of captured equipment, reorganization and re-deployment, and I do not intend to cover this period in detail as events have been fully reported elsewhere.

Border Incidents

134. The only incidents that were reported took place on the cease fire line with SYRIA on the 18 June and for three days previously. During this time there were several attempts by Syrian troops to establish new positions, using troops brought forward in Armoured Personnel Carriers. The last attempt took place near OUFRAINE YB6273, 8 Kilometres north of QNAITRA. On each occasion the Syrian troops withdrew when fired on by Israeli forces.

Internal Security

135. No real internal security problems arose during the period but on 19 June an explosive charge was found under a culvert some 500 metres south of Kibbutz GESHER YB3913, north of BEIT SHEAN. On 22 June a shoe mine exploded near Kibbutz BEIT SHIQMA KA5302, north-east of the GAZA Strip, slightly wounding a civilian. Three other similar mines were dismantled. They were thought to have been laid by an Egyptian Commando party during the recent hostilities.

136. It seems likely that no Internal Security problem arose during the period because the local population was recovering from the shock of the recent collapse of their armed forces and the occupation of their territories by the Israeli armed forces. Additionally, terrorist movements required time to organize themselves before beginning serious sabotage and terrorist activities.

Refugees

137. The movements of refugees and the problems concerning them have been fully covered elsewhere.

/SOME COMMENTS .....



SOME COMMENTS

138. One must give full credit to the Israeli Army for the speed and efficiency with which it conducted operations on all three fronts. Its philosophy was to attack, attack, and attack again; it proved capable of fighting in accordance with the classic and proven Principles of War. Having said this, it is worth remembering that **except perhaps** for the first few hours on 5 June, it operated under conditions of complete air supremacy and with massive air support against enemies who proved, despite their excellent equipment, to be badly led fifth class armies.

139. As I have continually maintained after seeing the results of the fighting on the various fronts, there is little evidence of any serious battles having taken place. There may have been anxious moments for ISRAEL in the early stages in SINAI; in and around JERUSALEM before the full weight of the Israeli attack could be deployed, and also during the break in battle on the Northern Front; but the casualties to men and equipment do not really point to heavy opposition. The only evidence of heavy and bitter fighting has been the statements made by the Israeli Army itself. In the heat of the fighting such exaggerated descriptions are not unusual but later sober reflection and analysis usually puts actions into their proper perspective. If the Israeli Army has analysed and reflected on the fighting it has not publically or privately modified its initial estimates. I believe it does realize the true nature of the various actions but, for reasons perhaps of public acclaim, vis-a-vis the Israeli Air Force and perhaps also for budgetary arguments, it prefers to maintain its first description of bitter and heavy fighting almost everywhere.

140. Leadership in the Israel Army was, under the circumstances, very good and the fact that 25% of the casualties were officers proved that the officers did really lead. Once again it must be remembered that in no instance does it appear that the Israeli plans were affected by enemy action or disrupted in any manner. It is interesting to speculate whether, in face of determined resistance and bitter opposition, the Israeli forces would have been capable of sufficient flexibility to change or modify their plans to take advantage of enemy weaknesses which suddenly became apparent. It is one thing to drive through and destroy weak and uncoordinated opposition but quite another to attack and then, having discovered the enemy's achilles heel, replan quickly, perhaps redeploy and attack with sufficient strength from another direction in order to seize a fleeting chance to defeat the enemy. Is the Israeli Army capable of such flexibility? The Six Day War did not provide the answer, the Army was not sufficiently tested.

141. As I have said; the Israeli philosophy is one of attack. Is it capable of prolonged and stubborn defence? How would it react to heavy air attack in concentration areas? These questions must also remain unanswered. However, there are two points which are worth mentioning. During the period just prior to hostilities when attachés visited an Armoured Brigade in its concentration area, there was no evidence of serious precautions being taken against an enemy air attack. Lately, in the SUEZ area, the Israeli forces there took no protective measures against enemy action until they were shelled by Egyptian forces during the incident on 24 October, 1967, when the SUEZ oil refineries were damaged. Even then the shelters and other defensive works were amateurish compared with those which would have been made by Western Armies.

/142. Morale, of .....



in the

## CONCLUSION

144.

- a. The performance of the Israeli Ground Forces must be viewed in its proper perspective and must not be exaggerated by ignoring the conditions and circumstances under which they fought; not least of these being a badly led and uncoordinated enemy.
- b. Reservations must be made when considering the defensive capabilities, the reactions to adverse circumstances, and, perhaps, the true morale of the Israeli Army.
- c. Mobilization and logistic planning and organization are excellent.

145. While these are serious reservations I do not believe that the Israeli Army will be inferior, except of course in strength, to any Arab Army. However, I do suggest, that should there be another war between them, the Israeli Army will not necessarily again have things all its own way. I believe that, even if they can never completely match Israeli efficiency and effectiveness, the Egyptian and particularly the Jordanian armies are surely capable of narrowing the gap considerably.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant.

Hogus



Mr. [unclear]  
Mr. [unclear] 16/1  
Mr. [unclear] 16.1  
Mr. [unclear] 16/1

Reference..... 15

NEAD 11.5/2

This dispatch is mainly for the record. The comments and conclusions in paragraphs 138-145 are interesting: the main one - highlighted in Mr. Hadrow's covering dispatch - is that the Israelis were never seriously extended, and that there is an element of overconfidence and hubris in their claims of a great victory.

Separate copy for J.R.O. Copy sent for volume print.

R's Anton  
5/1

I have sent Mr. Hadrow's dispatch for printing for the volume only but I have said that the DA's dispatch enclosed by Mr. Hadrow should not be printed.

/ I think



I think it is too detailed even for  
the volume and it is incomplete as  
it does not deal at all with the  
air war. However, you may like  
to glance at Colonel Rogers account  
and in particular you may wish  
to see his comments on pp 21  
and 22.

J. Mosely

13.1

My hunch is that if necessary  
the Israeli would do  
praise capture of Jerusalem  
defence.

AMT.

16.1

W. Carter



SECRET

(4/1)

(See also E2/52)



MA 4/3  
M. Moberly  
M. Davies  
M. Dyer  
M. Aspin  
British Embassy  
AMMAN.  
Jana 26.ii  
28.ii  
Enhm

26 February, 1968.

Dear John,

The Israeli offer not to attack Jordan  
in June 1967

E2/52(3)

You will have noticed from paragraph 6 (b) of the U.K. delegation, Strasbourg's telegram No. 1 Saving of 3 February to the Foreign Office, that the Jordanian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Abdul Munim Rifa'i is reported to have declared in answer to questions by members of the Assembly that his Government never received the Israeli Prime Minister's message, passed through General Bull on 5 June, in which the Israelis undertook not to attack Jordan if Jordan did not attack them.

2. I think it is now generally known that such a message was sent. For the record it is perhaps worth mentioning that after the war Prince Muhammad confirmed to a member of Chancery that King Hussein had in fact received the Israelis' message (Amman telegram No. 883 of 19 July to the Foreign Office) but had rejected the offer.

EJ3/8  
E2/51

Yours ever

David

(D.G. Crawford)

J.C. Moberly Esq.,  
Eastern Department,  
Foreign Office.

PA  
RSM  
7/5

Copied to:  
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→ R. J. ALSTON. Esq  
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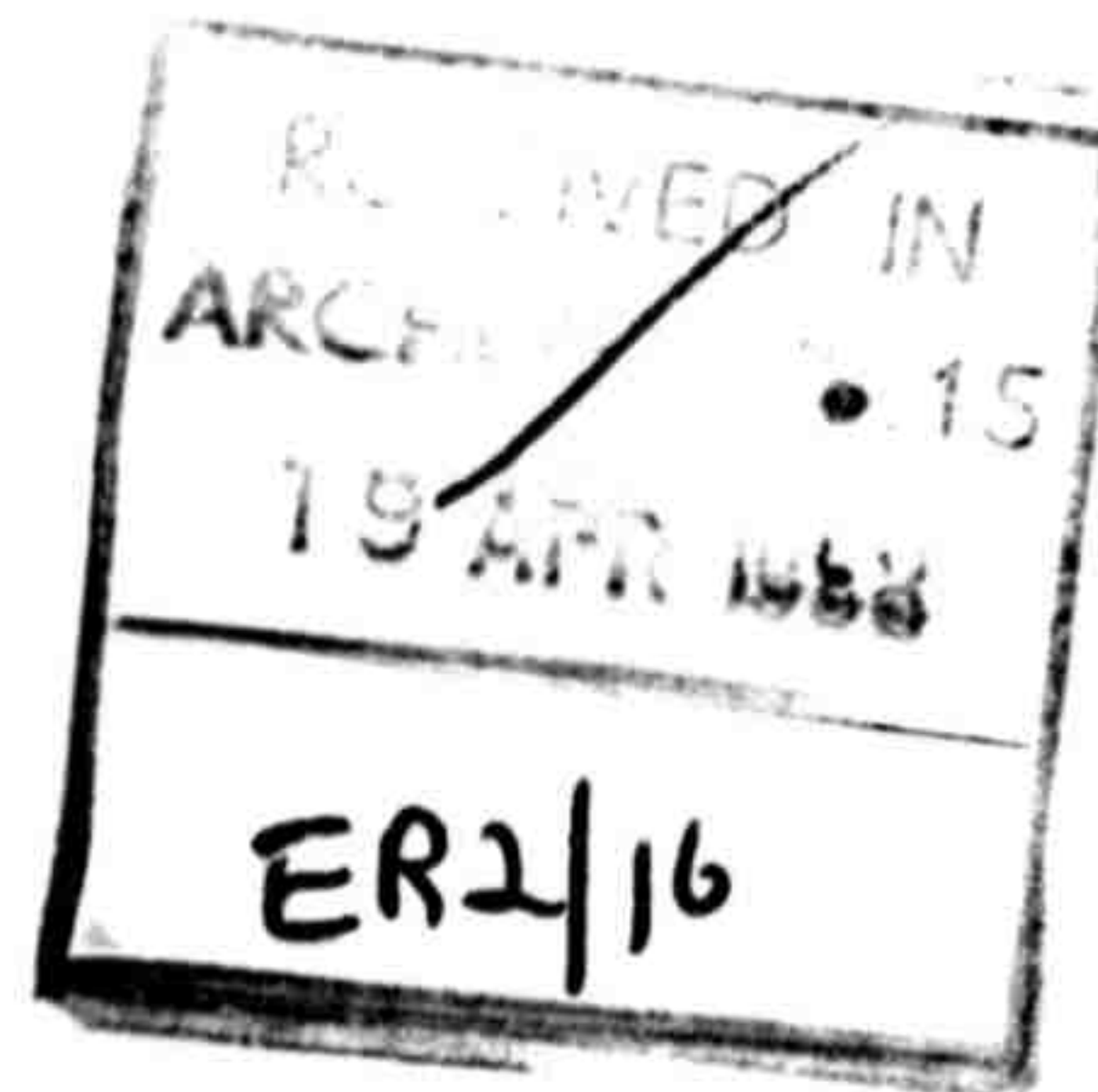
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11th April, 1968.

DA/5, /68

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THE SIX DAY WAR - THE JENIN BATTLE

Reference my Despatch No. 1 DA/5/2/1/67 dated 13th December, 1967, paragraphs 95 - 99.

I had an interesting briefing on the ground on 15 March about the operations in the JENIN area during the Six Day War. The briefings were by the two Brigade Commanders concerned, Aluf Mishne Bar Kochba and Rom.

Attached at Annexure 'A' is a short account of the action.

The most suitable map on which to follow the action is ISRAEL 1:100,000 Edition 1 - AMS Sheet 3054, Series K 632 NABLUS.

*H. Rogers*  
Colonel,  
Defence & Military Attaché,  
(H. ROGERS)

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ANNEX 'A' TO  
DA/5/2/1/68 DATED  
11 APR 68.

THE JENIN BATTLE

The Israel Forces Engaged

1. It now appears that the Israel forces engaged in the JENIN sector were:

Divisional HQ	General ELAD PELED
One Armoured Brigade	Colonel BAR KOCHBA
	One Centurion Battalion
	One Patton Battalion
	One Armoured Infantry Battalion
	Supporting Arms
One Armoured Brigade	Colonel ROM
	One AMX Battalion
	One Armoured Infantry Battalion
	Seventeen Centurion Tanks
	Supporting Arms

Note: Colonel ROM stated that he was ordered to leave one of his Armoured Battalions in the GALILEE area when his Brigade moved south on 5 June, but that he took the seventeen Centurions with him. It is not clear whether these were part of his second armoured battalion or whether they were detached from some other unit.

The Jordanian Forces

2. The Israelis estimated that there was one Brigade in the JENIN area, which was held in strength as were the hills running north west from JENIN through KFAR DAN YA1295 and beyond. There were gun areas south of KFAR DAN and EL YAMUN YA0996. East of JENIN there were other Jordanian forces in the areas of DEIR ABU DA'IF YA2293, FAQU'A YA2597 and JALQAMUS YA2290.

3. A very important point which the Israelis also appreciated was that 60 Jordanian Armoured Brigade which on 5 June was in the area of SALT, could intervene in the JENIN battle. It was estimated that within twelve hours one Armoured Regiment could be in the area and within twenty four hours the whole Brigade.

THE ACTION OF BAR KOCHBA'S

ARMoured BRIGADE

Introduction

4. Early on 5 June Colonel Bar Kochba was ordered to move his Brigade, which was formed from reserve units, from its concentration area. This was probably north east of HADERA KA8090, but it might have been YOKNEAM XB9817, and I was unable to clarify this point. His orders were to penetrate into DHARAT JALAMAT ES SUWEID Plain YA1291 (DOTAN VALLEY) in the area of EL YAMUN YA0996 and KFAR DAN YA1295 and to capture JENIN YA1693 from the west and south.

/5. It was .....

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5. It was obvious that an attack against Jordanian Forces in this area had been considered most improbable and the attack had not been planned nor had the ground been studied in detail prior to the war. Bar Kochba said the plan was made hurriedly during the move from the concentration area and was very much an "off the cuff" operation.

The Plan

6. Bar Kochba decided to break into the DOTAN Valley on 5 June using two routes.

- a. The Brigade, less one Armoured Regiment, was to cross the ISRAEL/JORDAN armistice line astride the road GIVAT OZ YB1704 - JENIN and then swing south passing west of EL YAMUN YA0996 to the area of TEL UM ZEID YA0695.
- b. One Armoured Regiment was to advance from the area of the WADI ARA YB0000 through the hills to YA'BAD YA0392 and thence due east into the DOTAN Valley.

7. By 0300 hrs on 6 June the force at paragraph a. above was in the TEL UM ZEID area. The Armoured Regiment at paragraph b. above was finding the ground difficult and had not yet reached the YA'BAD area, nor was it to do so for some time and did not join the action until late on 6 June.

8. At 0300 hrs on 6 June Bar Kochba appreciated that in order to prevent the intervention of 60 Jordanian Armoured Brigade, he must seize and hold QABATIYA YA1488 and the defile east of it through which the Jordanian Armour must pass to reach the DOTAN area.

9. Having made, in my view, a correct appreciation, Bar Kochba then ordered an attack which took little or no account of it. Using his Engineer troops to form a firm base in the TEL UM ZEID area, he detached an Armoured Company which had less than twelve runners, and ordered it to seize the road junction at YA132906 and establish a block there. He himself with the rest of his force attacked the Jordanian positions and gun areas in the vicinity of EL YAMUN YA0996 and KEIL DAN YA1295 and finally JENIN itself. The inevitable happened and by 1400 hrs on 6 June the force at the road junction YA132906 had been virtually wiped out by Jordanian tanks advancing through QABATIYA. The force attacking JENIN was heavily engaged in and around the town and the situation was becoming desperate.

10. During the afternoon GOC Northern Command reinforced the artillery and by evening there were five Regiments deployed to hold off the further advance of the Jordanian armour. At about 1600 hrs the Israeli Air Force also attacked the Jordanian armour but, because of the configuration of the ground, it appears not to have been very successful. On the ground the Israeli Engineers attempted to advance from their firm base at TEL UM ZEID but Jordanian fire prevented them from reaching the road junction YA132906. (Comment: I believe this was the Jordanian Armoured force which ran out of fuel during its advance from SALT and it is interesting to speculate what the outcome might have been had this not happened).

11. By the evening of 6 June Bar Kochba appears to have had the situation more or less under control again but he still faced the task of having to force his way through QABATIYA and the defile to the east during the hours of darkness or at first light next morning.

/THE ACTION OF ROM'S BRIGADE....



ANNEX 'A' TO  
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THE ACTION OF ROM'S BRIGADE

12. At about 1700 hrs on 5 June Colonel Rom with his brigade, constituted as shown in paragraph 1, above was ordered to move from his location in the GALILEE area to AFULE YB1510, which was not reached until dawn.

13. During the night 5/6 June Rom was ordered to capture the JENIN Police Station YA159941 as soon after first light (0430 hrs) as possible. To carry out this task Rom himself took a small force consisting of:-

A Jeep Recce Detachment (7 Jeeps)

One AMX Company

Seven Centurion Tanks (of the original seventeen Centurions he now only had fifteen as two had developed defects on the move to AFULE).

The rest of his force he ordered to move south along the AFULE - JENIN road as soon as it had all assembled in the AFULE area.

14. At about 0600 hrs on 6 June as the force was approaching JENIN, Rom was ordered to cancel his attack on the JENIN Police Station. Instead he was to turn east and advance on the axis DEIR ABU DA'IF YA2293 - JALQAMUS YA2290 - TILFIT YA2087 and EZ ZABABIDA YA1885.

15. It was obvious that the Divisional Commander had realized that it was essential to try and prevent 60 Jordanian Armoured Brigade reaching the QABATIYA YA1488 - DOTAN Valley area and had decided to use Rom's Brigade to block its axis of advance.

16. Rom still only had the small force shown in paragraph 13 above available. His main force was still in the AFULE area and not yet on the move. However, with this small force he reached the area of DEIR ABU DA'IF by 0700 hrs and then began a long and painfully slow advance to the area of TILFIT. Jordanian forces in the UMM EL TUT YA2091 - JALQAMUS YA2290 area had put up strong resistance and it was not until 1500 hrs that Rom's advance troops reached TILFIT and were in a position to dominate EZ ZABABIDA and the valley in which the town lies. It was 1600 hrs when the first troops of Rom's main force began to arrive in the TILFIT area.

17. By this time 1600 hrs most of 60 Jordanian Armoured Brigade had already reached QABATIYA or were through the town and beyond. Rom could see little movement around EZ ZABABIDA but his force did manage to knock out two Jordanian tanks which were about YA175875. Later in the day there were air strikes by the IAF in the valley between EZ ZABABIDA and AQQABA YA2182 which started fires from which smoke and flames could be seen but not the objects hit.

18. Rom decided he would continue his advance after dark and in order to by-pass the Jordanian tank obstacles which were placed across the head of the valley from approximately RAS EL AQRA YA2181 to KHIRBAT SALHAB YA2382, he ordered his recce detachment to try and find a route round the eastern (KHIRBAT SALHAB) end of the obstacles.

19. It appears that early on the night of 6/7 June the Jordanian Forces engaged abandoned all their positions in the JENIN, QABATIYA, EZ ZABABIDA areas. When Rom's force advanced after midnight there was no opposition encountered and the advance continued through TUBAS YA2378 and during 7 June to NABLUS YA1367 which the force entered from the south east and later that

/May engaged,.....



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ANNEX 'A' TO  
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day engaged Jordanian Forces withdrawing from TULKARM XA9177, QALAILIYA XA8564 and JENIN north west of the town destroying a large portion of them.

20. Meanwhile on 7 June Bar Kochba's Brigade having sorted itself out during the night of 6/7 June advanced through TUBAS into the JORDAN Valley reaching both the DAMIYA and ALLENBY Bridges before being withdrawn and moved north to take part in the Syrian battles on the 9/10 June.

#### Some Comments

21. Comment has already been made on Bar Kochba's extraordinary decision not to go for the vital ground on 6 June. See paragraph 9 above. I believe this was because:-

- a. This attack, unlike most of the Israeli attacks, had never been foreseen as a possibility during peace. It had never, therefore, been discussed, planned and rehearsed. It was as Bar Kochba himself said "done off the cuff" and this is not normal Israeli procedure.
- b. Bar Kochba was ordered to break through the Jordanian defences north west of JENIN and capture the town from the west and south and he was, therefore, going to do just that! I summed him up as a fire-eating commander but not gifted with much tactical sense.

22. That Rom's Brigade took over 12 hours to move from GALILEE to AFULE - a distance of under 50 kilometres on good roads and then took more time to collect itself together for the further advance, can only be explained by the fact that the Brigade was a reserve one whose training was not particularly good. One got the impression that Rom was driving them the whole way even to achieve the results he did.

23. Bar Kochba's failure to sieze the QABATIA area was not only practically a self destructing move but failed to trap the 60 Jordanian Brigade in the EZ ZABABIDA area by corking the bottle so that Rom's Brigade could, with the help of the IAF, deal with it. This no doubt was the intention of GOC Northern Command but the initial order to Rom to capture the JENIN Police Station and its subsequent cancellation seems a queer way to go about it. As it turned out, part of 60 Jordanian Armoured Brigade having advanced through QABATIYA, turned south along the main road from JENIN to NABLUS and was destroyed by Rom's forces north-west of NABLUS on 7 June (see paragraph 19 above).

24. It seems to me that in this particular action the Israeli higher Commanders can be criticised for an apparent failure to issue clear and straightforward orders and certainly for a failure to control and coordinate the action of the two Brigade Commanders concerned. I was particularly struck by the fact that neither Brigade Commander mentioned the actions of the other Brigade and when questioned neither appeared to appreciate that it was one battle and that their moves and plans needed any coordination whatsoever. In fact each was fighting "my battle". A 'ROM' way to conduct a war!

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Report On The Six Day War Including Events Leading Up To And Aftermath. Foreign Office, Eastern Department And Successors: Registered Files (E And NE Series): Post Mortem On Arab/Israeli 6 Day War. 11 Apr. 1968. MS Middle East Online: Iraq, 1914-1974: Selected files from series AIR, CAB, CO, FCO, FO, PREM, T, WO, The National Archives, Kew, UK FCO-017-411. The National Archives (Kew, United Kingdom). Archives Unbound, [link.gale.com/apps/doc/SC5107473668/GDSC?u=webdemo&sid=bookmark-GDSC&xid=750638d3&pg=1](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/SC5107473668/GDSC?u=webdemo&sid=bookmark-GDSC&xid=750638d3&pg=1). Accessed 11 Apr. 2022.